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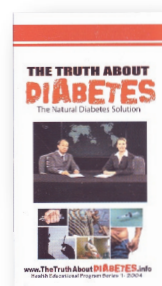
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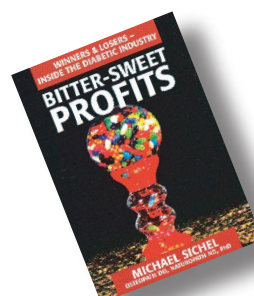
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Canada



## Electoral dysfunction

adapted from Fair Vote Canada

Once again, Canada's antiquated first-past-the-post system wasted millions of votes, distorted results, severely punished large blocks of voters, exaggerated regional differences, created an unrepresentative Parliament, and gave us the wrong government.

The chief victims of the January 23 federal election were:

#### Western Liberals:

In the prairie provinces, Conservatives got three times as many votes as Liberals did, but won nearly 10 times as many seats. In Alberta, the Conservative Party won 100 percent of the seats with 65 percent of the votes. The 500,000 Albertans who voted otherwise, elected no one.

**Urban Conservatives:** The 400,000-plus Conservative voters in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver should have been able to elect about nine MPs, but instead elected no one. The three cities together will not have a single MP in the governing caucus, let alone the cabinet.

**New Democrats:** The NDP attracted a million more votes than the Bloc, but the voting system gave the Bloc 51 seats, the NDP 29. Nearly 18 percent of Canadians voted NDP, but the party won less than 10 percent of the seats and does not hold the balance of power, unlike the Liberals and the Bloc.

**Green Party:** More than 650,000 Green Party voters across the country elected no one, while 475,000 Liberal voters in Atlantic Canada elected 20 MPs.

**Federalists and nationalists:** As usual, the voting system turned entire regions of Canada into partisan fiefdoms, rather than allowing the diversity of views in all regions to be fairly

represented in Parliament and within each national party.

"How can anyone continue to think that this voting system gives us good geographic representation," said Wayne Smith, president of Fair Vote Canada, "when it fragments and divides our country like this?"

"Had results been fair, it is possible that we may have even seen a different government," said Smith. "The Liberals, NDP and Greens represent a majority, and together they would have held a majority of seats."

Had the same votes been cast under a proportional voting system, Fair Vote Canada projected that the seat allocation would have been approximately as follows:

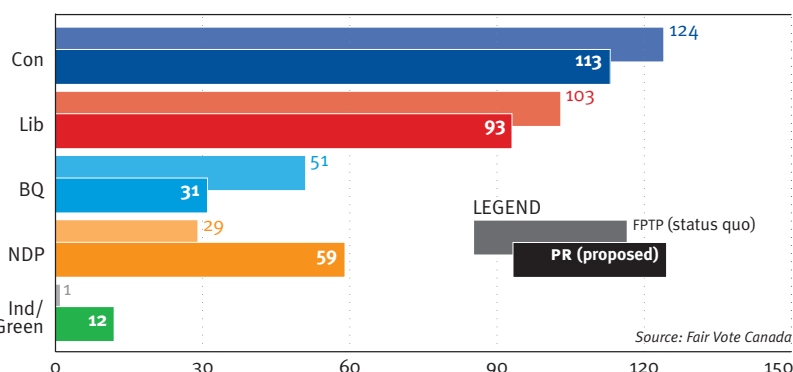
- Conservatives – 36.3% of the popular vote: 113 seats (not 124)
- Liberals – 30.1% of the popular vote: 93 seats (not 103)
- NDP – 17.5% of the popular vote: 59 seats (not 29)
- Bloc – 10.5% of the popular vote: 31 seats (not 51)
- Greens – 4.5% of the popular vote: 12 seats (not 0)

However, Smith emphasized that speculation should be tempered. "With a different voting system, people would have voted differently," he said. "There would have been no need for strategic voting. We would likely have seen higher voter turnout. We would have had different candidates – more women and more diversity of all kinds. We would have had more real choices."

"The voting system really matters – a lot – and the system we have is simply not acceptable in a modern democracy."  
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### 2006 Federal Election Results

Seats won under First Past the Post (FPTP) vs Proportional Representation (PR)





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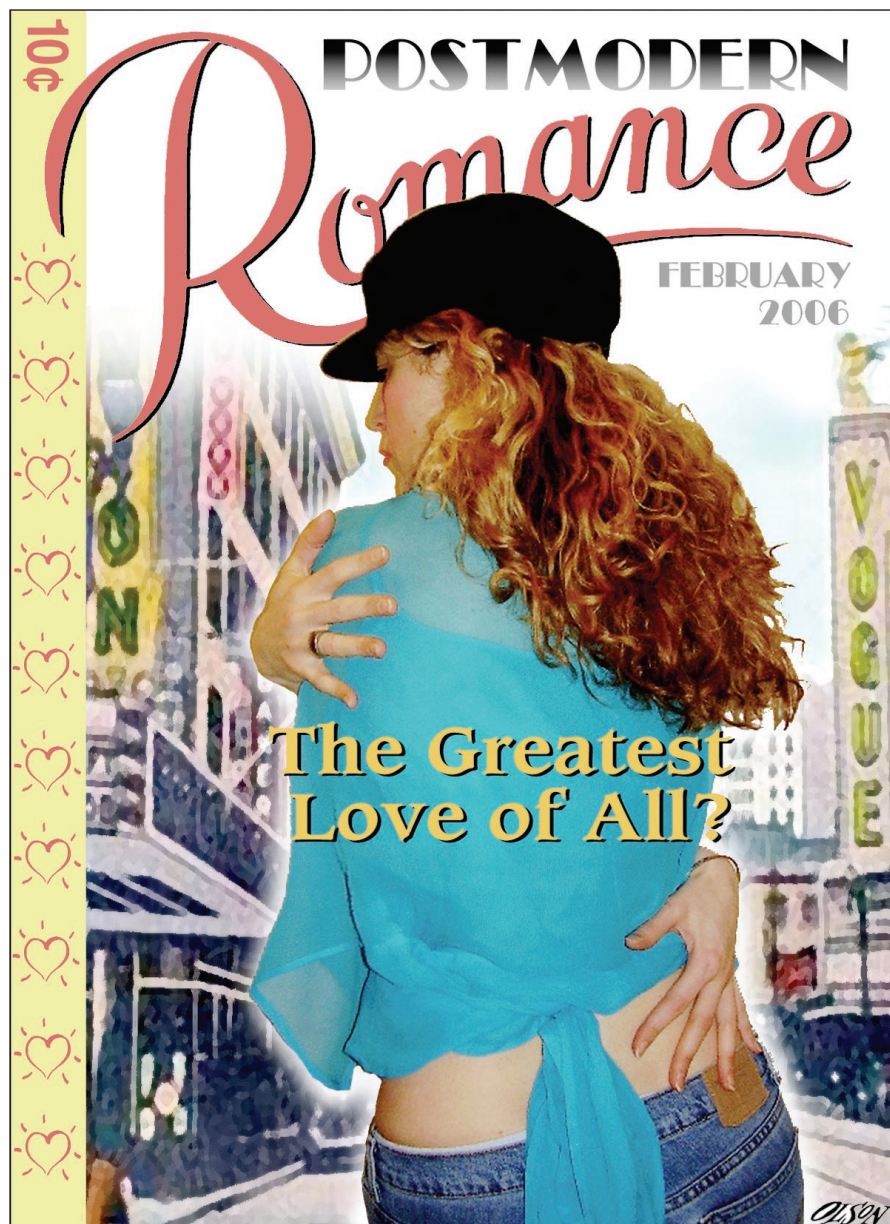
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# Love and its counterfeits

by Geoff Olson

T.S. Eliot had it wrong. The cruellest month isn't April, but two months earlier, when advertisers and the media go off on a Valentine's Day bender.

The overkill is okay for couples

renewing their commitment to the greeting card industry, but it's not so great for the sorry ranks of the unattached, who get to slum around with the scarlet letter of singlehood.

Most of us want to believe that romantic love works, assuming we haven't yet aged into a fine whine of bitterness. There are plenty of good reasons to believe in love, if only to keep the species going. Without the ideal of eros, our great works of art, music and literature would probably be whittled down to gangsta rap, Tom Clancy novels and installation art.

Not that relationships were ever easy. Love's theme park tests both the brave and the foolhardy. You and a companion prepare for a ride through the tunnel of love, and suddenly you're in the dark, arguing about where you're going. Next thing you're pulling Gs on the counselling tilt-o-whirl, or losing it on the in-law scream machine. But fate willing, there will be enough good times to make the stress worthwhile. That's assuming you have a steady companion. The most common complaint I hear among Vancouverites, besides the weather, is the difficulty of meeting the right person.

Perhaps our world-class city, with its big population of singles, has become too classy, too inward, for its own good. In response, some local media has taken to spinning solo as celebratory. Last February, one newsweekly ran a lead Valentine article on the slippery joys of self-love. A year earlier, a local entertainment weekly provided some sybaritic advice for the solitary, offering restaurant choices for a romantic dinner alone. You know the times they are a-changin' when the expression "go screw yourself" has transformed from a personal insult to a marketing opportunity.

From the anecdotal evidence of the media and the talk of friends, we may suspect that relationships are becoming more problematic as our lives become more complex. Many of us have friends who have given up the search completely. They find pyrrhic victory in singlehood; their banner is a calendar full of free weekends and their throne a pre-warmed seat in a coffee shop. In today's fast-paced urban environment, singlehood has become Shakespearean. Romeo sits morosely in a Starbucks sipping coffee while fitness-freak Juliet jogs past the window with her iPod. He

catches a glimpse of her and returns to his paper. She catches a bus and heads home to dress up for a romantic dinner by herself. The two will never meet in this near-myth, because he's on LavaLife and she's not.

At this time of year, the media focuses on finding love, as opposed to the less interesting, but more pressing, question of keeping it. The usual themes are sexual chemistry, astrological compatibility and pop-psychology's Mars/Venus gender differences. But something else deeper is going on with the difficulty moderns have in connecting and staying connected, reflected in the relative absence of any credible, heartfelt love songs in recent popular music. (Easy-listening schmaltz doesn't cut it.)

When the latest research findings about female ejaculation, or a newly discovered erogenous zone, are trumpeted in the press like the unearthing of a Mayan temple, we can't claim to live in sexually repressed times. We can, however, state with some assurance that we live in a culture that is growing more and more messed up about love and straightforward connection. Love, romantic or otherwise, is defined, and experienced, as a deep sense of connection to another being. But the temper of the times is in the opposite direction. This involves more than just a disconnect between couples.

In his book *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (Simon & Schuster, 2000), Harvard professor Robert D. Putnam examined social statistics from the past century in the US and found a surprising decline in the number of civic organizations, guilds, sports leagues, neighbourhood clubs and volunteer groups. Americans, among the most gregarious people on earth, have retreated in huge numbers from service to the community to tending the self. This trend has been accompanied by several decades worth of ego-massaging messages from conservative foundations, think tanks, public relations firms, and advertising companies, with the self-esteem industry and personal growth movement joining the chorus.

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The messages – just do it, be all you can be, find yourself and look out for number one – all dovetail into something that may seem relatively benign at first glance. Yet the notion that you owe it to yourself to be happy easily shades into a much more toxic message: that you owe nothing to anyone but yourself. That kind of attitude would be absurd enough among so-called primitive people, let alone people living in the most advanced part of the world. Yet the message is becoming normative, and social programmers are turning up the gain on the signal. As the disparities grow between rich and poor, we are led to believe that a rain-soaked person in the street with an outstretched hand is not a thou, but an it, a civic stain on par with sidewalk litter or potholes in the street. This isn't a climate conducive to connection, in any sense.

The *Bowling Alone* trend has multiple causes, but the economic factor is paramount. We are working longer and harder for less, often taking jobs hundreds of miles away from family. We find we have less time and energy to cultivate new connections with others, and when we do, they are often mediated by electronic commerce, just like our work lives. When the pressures of day-to-day life have some wage slaves fearing they themselves might plunge through the social safety net and land flat on the streets, the reflexive response is defensive and inward. In this Darwinian cultural climate, love becomes more of a commodity than a living reality, skeletonized into the recipes of self-help books, sentimentalized in Hollywood schlock and counterfeited by the quick fix of porn.

In a survey cited by the *New York Times*, Americans rated Boston and New York as the loneliest cities in the US to live in. In another poll, New Yorkers put "having lots of friends" near the bottom of the list of desired personal traits. "Taking responsibility for your actions" was number one. For denizens of the Big Apple, pride in stand-alone autonomy far outweighs connection with non-family members – in other words, community. It's impossible for this kind of urban attitude not to affect the possibilities for romantic love, if only because the old ways, including

introduction through friends, have become more a thing of the past.

Urbanites rush around in all directions, meeting schedules, making brief contact and parting ways. That's less tragedy than trajectory, but it's harder to create lasting chemical bonds in this hot, high-pressure environment. For people living in subsistence societies, relaxed face-to-face contact is not a luxury, but a necessity. With urban life's dense overlay of restrictions and regulations, along with electronic communications and professional Balkanization, we no

*When we're incomplete,  
we're always searching  
for somebody to complete us. When, after a  
few years or a few months  
of a relationship, we find  
that we're still unfulfilled,  
we blame our partners  
and take up with somebody more promising.*

– Tom Robbins

longer depend on the verbal "pay me back next time" agreement. Mutuality and reciprocity, the glue for both friendship and the barter system, are not essential to a post-industrial economy. Long-term connections increasingly seem a relic from an age of small towns and staying put.

Of course, there have been plenty of gains for personal autonomy in this exchange, making for important, progressive change. We've traded the arranged marriage for the coffee date with a stranger (among my married friends, I can number two couples who met online). Yet the meaning of "to connect" now has connotations that are less social than techno, referring to the hum of a fax machine, a visit from the cable guy or a line up your serial port.

Some years back, I read a travel account in a local paper that stuck with me. A woman travelling through

Iran discovered a society of tightly drawn restrictions and observances, yet below the clerically demarcated lines of a theocratic society, she discovered neighbourhoods where deep friendships lasted through time. She described the warm welcome she received, with a level of hospitality she had never experienced back home. In contrast, mid-'90s Vancouver had the infrastructure the poorer parts of Iran lacked – phone lines, faxes, Internet access, cable TV – all this, she noted, in a city where you can still "die from loneliness." That may sound a bit extreme, but anyone who spent some time travelling will understand her point. I can't endorse Iran's current governance, which has revealed its lethal side to at least one female journalist from the West. But I have doubts about any plan to liberate Persians from their oil (sorry, I meant oppressors) and bless them with free market capitalism, which, for many, means the freedom to sleep under bridges. The great virtues of modern life connect, like a Mobius strip, to its tremendous vices, not the least of which is the dependency of the First World on the natural resources and labour of the Third World.

The irony is that compared to most places in the world, we live in great comfort and plenty. No one can deny that, in relative terms, we're blessed with an abundance of opportunities. With our baseline needs met, we have the opportunity to obsess all we want about any loving we feel we're missing out on. When we do find a relationship, it's common to expect the other party to be therapist, sexual partner, mother/father and friend. No culture other than our own would be mad enough to expect one person to fulfill all of these roles. But such an attitude is almost a given in a time of diminished community, with proper mentors and extended families a thing of the past. The absence has created a social vacuum, which the media infosphere now occupies. We swim in a sea of information, exposed to thousands of messages a day. These memes are precisely tailored by clever professionals to get under our skin and work into our psyches like spirochetes. Advertising, television, film and the

*continued on p. 34*

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# Are you fit for love?



by Olga Sheean

Whether they come and go or endure, relationships are designed to show us who we really are and what we can become. They enable us to discover our strengths, our creativity and, above all, what is missing within ourselves. As a result, they provide us with the means to become the powerful, loving individuals that we were meant to be. Once we understand their true role, relationships can become the most liberating, rewarding and empowering experiences available to human beings.

A friend of mine recently lost his wife as a result of an accident. He was devastated by her sudden departure, having had her by his side for almost 30 years. The loss was all the more painful because they had both invested a lot in their marriage, working through their personal issues with a great deal of mutual love, commitment and determination. Despite the pain of losing her, however, her death triggered a profound transformation in him.

As he began to come to terms with living without her, he discovered that he had allowed his power as an individual (in other words, his ability to fully be himself) to remain suppressed in his marriage and that he had some subconscious beliefs that had vastly limited his experience of himself and of life in general. He also realized that some vital missing pieces within himself had prevented him from living and loving fully.

A closer look at the dynamics of his marriage yielded him many other important insights. In his three decades of married life, he had become so good at setting aside his own needs that he had not realized how much he had given up of himself.

The reasons for this lay in his childhood, which had not been easy. He had been forced to take care of a disabled younger sister and his father always had unrealistic expectations of him. There had been little time, love or affection for him.

These family pressures led him to subconsciously conclude certain things about himself and about love:

my primary purpose is to take care of others' needs; my own needs are secondary, so my power must be set aside; the true expression of my love (power) is not welcome; I must suppress it or it will have a negative effect on those I love; and loving someone means giving them what I think they need, rather than being who I really am.

Subconscious beliefs such as these are extremely powerful in determining the quality of relationships later in life.

What we believe we deserve, how lovable we think we are and how important we believe ourselves to be are crucial factors in determining our capacity for intimacy and fulfillment. But these beliefs also have a very physical effect on our circumstances. They result in our attracting their perfect counterpart: for example, a partner whose neediness perfectly matches our subconscious belief that we must

take care of others' needs in order to be worthy of their love. The partner we attract will also perfectly mirror back to us our specific missing pieces (essential formative qualities), such as acceptance, trust, affection, respect, validation, support, etc. that we needed to integrate as children in order to be complete, but failed to learn because our parents had these same missing pieces.

Our missing pieces determine how we act, the choices we make, how successful we become and how fulfilled and happy we are. And they are all the more powerful for being outside of our conscious awareness.

We all have three or four primary missing pieces and relationships are usually the only way that we discover what they are. Our subconscious will always bring us what we ultimately

need so that we can reach our fullest potential; it does this most effectively by bringing us a partner with the same missing pieces as us. If we understand and take advantage of this external mirror, we can identify and fill in our missing pieces, thereby making ourselves complete. We then automatically attract more wholesome, loving relationships.

Relationships never happen by accident, however random they may seem. We attract them so that we can

come into our full power in certain areas, but they can be deeply painful until we realize that this is their primary role. Pain represents the flip side of our power, as my widowed friend came to realize. For this reason, it is also the most unrelenting messenger. It will not quit until we understand its message. If we fail to get the message, we recreate a similar dynamic in our next relationship. But if

we manage to interpret the message correctly, and fill in our missing pieces, we break through to where most of our power lies and we can then literally make magic happen.

There are two ways to identify your most significant subconscious beliefs and missing pieces. If you can detach from the drama or pain of your particular situation – you may be in an abusive relationship or you may have just broken up with your partner, for example – ask yourself some objective questions along the lines of the following: *What kind of person would attract someone who had difficulty being intimate with his/her partner?* Answer: Someone who felt he/she did not feel lovable. *What kind of person would deny his own needs in favour of others' needs?* Answer: Someone who felt unimportant or unworthy.

Your answers may not be very appealing, but your partner will always give you the key to figuring out what is going on inside you. And only by transforming yourself on the inside can you have a positive effect on your external world.

To identify your missing pieces, make a list of all the qualities that you would have liked to experience in your relationship with your partner but did not. Take each one of these and see how you could apply them in practical ways in your everyday life. If respect is on your list, for example, look at the ways you could practise self respect: by putting yourself first in healthy ways, by taking care of your needs, by demonstrating respect for yourself and others and by saying "no" to any form of abuse or manipulation. As you practise greater self respect, you will be commanding greater respect from others around you. As you fill in your missing pieces, you begin to attract situations, dynamics and relationships that are filled with these same positive qualities.

Identifying what is missing in yourself will give you a clear understanding of why your relationships are the way they are, and why your life is the way it is. Filling in your missing pieces will not only transform your relationships, but also the way you act, the level of success and abundance you experience, the choices you make and how powerful you are in creating what you want.

Emotional pain is almost always an indication that we have abandoned our true self in some way, usually in favour of another person. Yet, ironically, our significant *other* – present or absent, near or far, loving or not – is our catalyst for growth, propelling us towards wholeness. Pain, the great messenger, will always remind us of that inescapable truth when we forget.

Olga Sheean is a relationship coach, kinesiologist and author of *Fit for Love – Find Your Self and Your Perfect Mate*. Available at Banyen Books and Duthie Books in Vancouver or through [www.fitforlove.net](http://www.fitforlove.net).



# Making Love Last

For month's issue, we invited a number of local therapists to submit their thoughts about what makes love work and which patterns and behaviours work against love. Fear, poor communication and unhealthy boundaries top the list of love's detractors.

## When talking to your partner is more labour than love

Some clients laugh and some get teary-eyed in amazement when they truly get what their partner has been saying all along. All of them experience profound relief the moment they feel genuinely heard by their loved one.

Most couples come to therapy because they do not connect when they talk. A wall of past resentments, assumptions and foggy attempts to tell each other what they need blocks the joyful path to a shared experience of life as partners. First, I explore how a couple talk and listen to each other. I prescribe exercises to strengthen and clear responsible expression and true listening. Once the pathway is cleared, couples can work through all their separate issues.

Jamini Hilton, registered clinical counsellor, 604-802-4126

## The boundaryless pitfall

The love is there, the chemistry clicks and the passion thrives, but "boundaryless" behaviours that lurk beneath the surface can wreck a relationship. What are boundaryless behaviours? The most obvious examples are:

1. Addictions: substance abuse, compulsive spending and infidelity.
2. Falling into boundaryless spaces such as endless arguing and conflict, hysterical overreactions and violence.
3. Extreme dysfunctional family roles, such as victims or perpetrators.

Because these behaviours are often cunning, baffling and powerful, a therapeutic process is necessary that includes a courageous commitment to get to the origins of the behaviours, seeing clearly how they operate in your life, working out the fears and taking a lot of little baby steps towards changing how you relate to each other, particularly in the area of communications.

John Arnold PhD, 604-261-2788.  
[www.members.shaw.ca/johnarnoldphd/](http://www.members.shaw.ca/johnarnoldphd/)  
A complete version of The Boundaryless Pitfall is available at Dr. Arnold's website.

## Little love, little talk, little joy

Many emotional problems in a relationship come from painful

experiences that most couples go through as they learn to cope with each other's personality and emotional issues. Just as a car requires a tune up, it is important to work on the relationship for prevention. Do not wait until everything breaks down or reaches a crisis. Relationship failure is preventable when you learn how to identify which issues you should be paying close attention to in your relationships.

The recommended solution for a happier relationship? Relationships require *hard* work as well as *heart* work. Strive to improve your listening, communication and conflict resolution skills. Learn to identify and build on your relationship strengths. Learn how to respond and embrace each other rather than react. People in supportive loving relationships are more likely to feel healthier, happier and satisfied with their lives and less likely to have mental or physical health problems. Good relationships are good for you.

Vincent Milardo MA, CHT,  
counsellor/hypnotherapist, 604-669-9699.  
[www.medhypnosiscenter.com](http://www.medhypnosiscenter.com)

## Befriend your fears

The most common relationship problem I see in my office is fear – fear of intimacy, of childhood wounds and of success and failure. However, I was taught that everyone who comes in is already whole. The solution is a friendship between your fears and your wholeness. When you stop the internal battle, the outside reflection in the relationship changes.

Some suggestions: Step 1. Decide to stop battling with yourself and others. Step 2. Stop any thoughts and behaviours that are not working. Step 3. Make a list of the thoughts, behaviours and feelings that honour your relationship. Then jump into the deeper waters that are now required to transform your relationships. Step 4. If you cannot adequately stop these compulsive patterns, seek qualified professional help.

Michael Talbot Kelly MA, RCC,  
holistic psychotherapist, 604-317-1613

## Lost in translation

Translation is always required in couples counselling. We all come from different families and each family has its own gestalt. Also, unless we connect with the guy/girl next door, most couples come from different neighbourhoods, cities, countries and even different religions. In a heterosexual couple, the cultures of male and female come into play, and this too requires translation.

We often misinterpret our partner's communication because the words are louder than the intent behind them. Also,

when we carry emotional baggage, it is easy to project old beliefs onto our partner and ascribe to them negative feelings that have nothing to do with them.

Only by taking on the perspective of no-blame and assuming that two people with benevolent intentions have gotten themselves caught, can we begin to unravel the situation and connect to the hearts behind the projections.

Lorraine Bennington, registered psychologist, [transformance@shaw.ca](mailto:transformance@shaw.ca), [www.dragonflyvillage.com/](http://www.dragonflyvillage.com/)  
LorraineBennington

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# Koyaanisqatsi redux

## Philip Glass and ensemble perform live

Philip Glass and the Philip Glass Ensemble are in town to perform the music of the epic *Koyaanisqatsi* live at a special screening of the film at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre on February 23.

With *Koyaanisqatsi* and the films that followed in the *Qatsi Trilogy*, visionary director Godfrey Reggio, interviewed here, invented his own film style, bringing audiences images of extraordinary emotional impact and thought-provoking relevance. Part essay, part image-and-music extravaganza, the three films chronicle the rapid evolution and astonishing effect of the modern world over the last few decades.

During filmmaking, Reggio invited the experimental composer Philip Glass to create a score for *Koyaanisqatsi* that was to have a profound influence on the film's reception – sparking a continuing collaboration between the two artists. Glass became an integral part of the film's creation, sitting in on editing sessions to meld his syncopated rhythms and rapid arpeggios into a groundbreaking fusion of image and music.

Perhaps the most famous sequence is of New York's traffic: sped-up images of cars, cabs and buses streaming up the avenue, stopping at lights while traffic floods across, then stops; pulsating over and over again.

The film's Hopi-language title translates roughly as "life out of balance," and this was Reggio's simple but searing theme, as the film unveiled a vision of an urban society moving at a frenetic pace, overwhelmed by technology and detached from the natural environment. In images at once both stark and beautiful, assaulting and hypnotizing, *Koyaanisqatsi* creates a wordless experience of modern life in the western hemisphere. The film won passionate fans around the world, including Francis Ford Coppola, who lent his name to it as a presenter.

### Interview with *Koyaanisqatsi* director Godfrey Reggio

**You were a monk before you started making films, right?**

I was a full-fledged lifer – I went in at 14, took my final vows at 25 and exited at 28.

**Coming from that place of contemplation, what inspired you to start making the *Qatsi* films?**

In the order I was in, each brother takes five vows, one of which is teaching the poor gratuitously. As a young person I was seized by this idea of social justice and I wanted very much to follow my vow of teaching the poor gratuitously. I was told that was not practical or feasible, because how would we run our schools, etc.? But being idealistic, my activities became a problem for my superiors.

*It's naïve to pray for world peace if we're not going to change the form in which we live.*

During the course of this time – the sixties – I worked with street gangs, and I saw this great film by Luis Buñuel called *Los Olvidados*, *The Forgotten Ones* or *The Young and the Damned*. This was purely spiritual inspiration. I guess I've seen it 150 times or more because it was constantly requested by gang members – I remarked to myself that I and so many others could be so moved by [it]. That motivated me to look into cinema in an entirely different kind of way.

**Are there certain messages or feelings that you hope people will take with them when they see the *Qatsi* films?**

Having been an educator for so many years I know that all a good teacher can do is set a context, raise questions or enter into a kind of a dialogic relationship with their students. I've made these films deliberately wrapped in ambiguity. I hope they ascend to the level of art. The power of art is its mystery – the meaning is in the eye of the beholder. So when I make a film I think of it as a "trilectic" relationship of image, music, and the viewer. If there are 100 people that see this film in a theatre at any given time, then there could be 100 different points of view about it.

I wanted to create an experience through the films, something where people could have the freedom of their own response to them. So, not for lack

of love of language, but because I feel our language is in an enormous state of humiliation, I decided to make films without words.

Now, having said that, I've taken the famous dictum, "a picture's worth a thousand words," and turned it completely upside down. I try to offer the viewer a thousand pictures to give them the power of one word; in this case from an inscrutable, uncivilized and illiterate language, Hopi, which I think has more wisdom in it than our own language, which has lost its ability to describe the world in which we live. I've chosen words like *Koyaanisqatsi*, *Powaqqatsi* and *Naqoyqatsi* so that I could use their subjective categories to look at the white people's "civilized" world. In my case, I'm trying to look at this world as if an alien appeared and was trying to make some visual if not emotive sense out of what they encounter.

**In the mid-seventies, you worked on a multi-media "privacy campaign" to educate the public about the invasion of privacy.**

It was right after the Watergate hearings started. My colleagues [and I] felt that was just the tip of the iceberg, that in fact all Americans had dossiers kept on them by credit agencies and government agencies; and that the technologies developed for the moon [landing] and Vietnam were translated into technology used to control behaviour or to put surveillance on the population. The motto of that campaign, which was done in 1974, was "Ten years and counting" – we were anticipating of course Orwell's 1984.

What we experience now was already solidly in place during that time, it's just that people didn't have much attention for it. Now, it's inescapable. It's lamentable that people accept it as the price we pay for the pursuit of our technological happiness.

**What role does technology play in your films?**

The main focus of the *Qatsi Trilogy*, which has been the focus of my work over the last 27 years, has been technology with a big T because, from my point of view, technology is probably the most misunderstood subject in the

*continued on p. 28*



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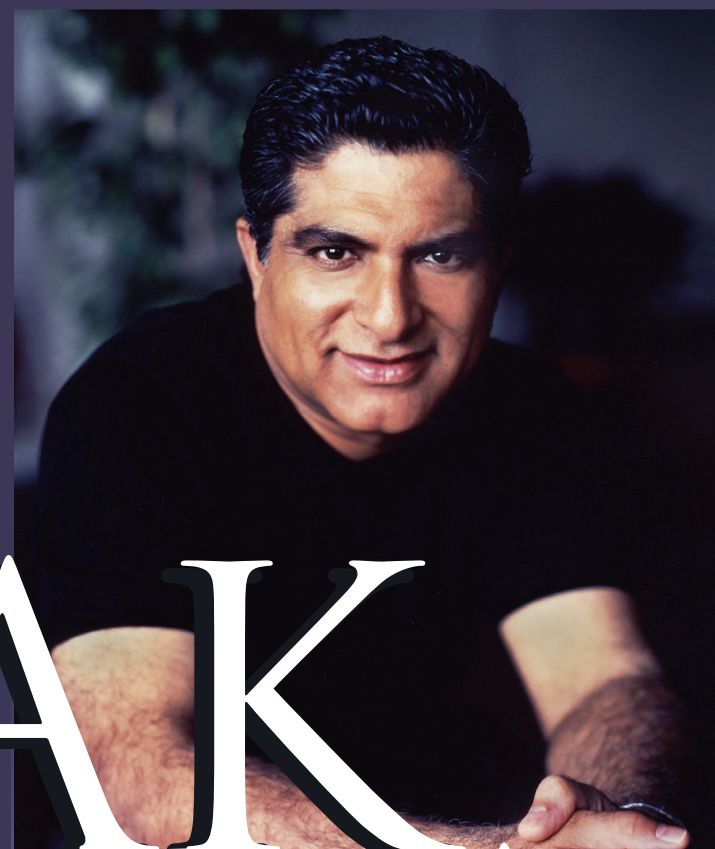
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# Fine-tune your fat intake

NUTRISPEAK • VESANTO MELINA MS, RD

## HEALTH

February is heart month. Whereas past research focused on the amount of dietary fat as a trigger for cardiovascular disease, we now know that both quantity and quality of fat impact our blood vessels. Here are six steps to take to make the fat in your diet work for you instead of against you. (From *Becoming Vegetarian* by Vesanto Melina and Brenda Davis, Wiley Canada, 2003.)

### Step 1. Get 15 to 35 percent of your calories from fat

If you are inactive, overweight or have chronic disease, aim for the lower end of this range. People who are lean and active, athletes, teens and children can aim for the higher end. By 15 to 35 percent of calories, how much fat do we mean? For someone eating 2,000 calories, this means two and a half to five tablespoons of fat. Good sources are whole plant foods such as those listed below. Note that nuts and seeds are not linked with obesity, unlike concentrated fats and oils and high-fat animal products. Each of the following provides about one tablespoon of fat:

- ¼ cup nuts or seeds
- ½ avocado
- 20 olives
- 1 cup medium tofu
- ½ cup firm tofu or tempeh
- 2 cups regular soymilk
- ½ cup shredded coconut

Note that one tablespoon of fat or oil is entirely fat.

### Step 2. Minimize your transfat intake

Trans fatty acids should make up less than one percent of your calories; an intake of zero is better still. Accomplish this by restricting or eliminating foods containing hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated fats: cookies, crackers, pastries, pies, snack foods, hydrogenated margarine, shortening and most fried foods. Don't be fooled by a label declaration of "All-vegetable oil." Read the ingredient list. Dairy products also contain trans fats.

### Step 3. Limit saturated fats

Restrict saturated fats to seven percent of calories or less; avoid the heavy hitters, such as butter, cheese, eggs, fatty animal products and tropical oils.

If you use dairy, replace whole milk and sour cream with skim milk and non-fat yogurt. Spread your toast with nutritious almond or cashew butter. For breakfast, try scrambled tofu. In baking, substitute ground flaxseed for eggs.

### Step 4. Keep your intake of omega-6 fatty acids moderate

Humans require some dietary omega-6 fatty acids; excellent sources

are sunflower, pumpkin and sesame seeds. Along with valuable fats, seeds deliver minerals (zinc and copper) plus vitamin E. Most Canadians consume too many omega-6s because these are plentiful in a great many foods and in the oils (corn, safflower, sunflower, soy, cottonseed) used in processed foods. Such oils do provide omega-6s, but without the other beneficial nutrients found in whole foods.

### Step 5. Select reliable sources of omega-3 fatty acids

The other fats that we need are omega-3 fatty acids; these are present in far fewer foods. We require three to six grams of omega-3 fatty acids per day. Excellent sources are flaxseed, flaxseed oil, hempseeds, hempseed oil, canola oil and walnuts. Each of the following provides three grams of omega-3 fatty acids:

- 1 tsp flaxseed oil
- 1 tbsp hempseed oil
- 2 tbsp ground flaxseed
- 2 tbsp canola oil
- ¼ cup walnuts

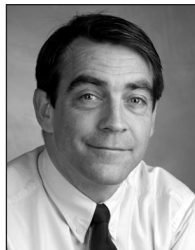
A few other foods also contribute to our intake: we get one gram of omega-3 fatty acids from 10 cups of dark leafy greens, one cup of soybeans, or six ounces of firm tofu. Fish provide long-chain omega-3 fatty acids (DHA), however, serious environmental, health, and animal rights issues make this choice less than ideal. However, fish get their omega-3s from micro-algae and we can get this DHA in veggie caps ([www.veganessentials.com](http://www.veganessentials.com)). When using these supplements, 100-300 mg of DHA per day is generally recommended (higher end of the range for pregnant and lactating women).

### Step 6. Rely on whole foods

The highest quality fat comes from fresh whole foods such as nuts, seeds, olives, avocados and soy foods. Wherever possible, rely on these instead of concentrated fats and oils for most of your fat. Whole foods come carefully packaged by nature to protect them from damaging light, heat and air. Whole plant foods provide phytochemicals, including antioxidants, plant sterols, vitamins and minerals and are the very best sources of essential fatty acids.

Vesanto Melina is the author of seven food and nutrition classics. Her career in nutrition includes a prior role as staff dietitian in Dr. Dean Ornish's renowned heart disease reversal program. For personal consultations, home office 604-882-6782 or Fort Integrated Health Clinic 604-888-8325. [www.nutrispeak.com](http://www.nutrispeak.com)





# February is Heart Month

DRUG BUST • ALAN CASSELS

*We become what we behold. We shape our tools and then our tools shape us.*

— Marshall McLuhan

If you ever find yourself contemplating your own mortality among the tombstones in Victoria's lush Ross Bay cemetery, overlooking the shimmering Straits of Juan de Fuca, you could, very conveniently, do something to try to delay it.

You could walk across the street to the neighbourhood Fairfield Plaza, a place where you'll find everything you need to serve your earthly desires: a grocery store, a pub, a medical clinic, a bakery, a hair dresser and a community drug store.

Like thousands of pharmacies around the world, this drug store has a squat, innocuous blood pressure machine, back near the dispensing counter. There, you'll often see people donning the cuff to check out their numbers, while they wait for the pharmacist to prepare their prescriptions.

In fact, this month, you're likely to see a lot more activity around blood pressure machines, as February is Heart Month in Canada. Sponsored by the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Heart Month is all about getting Canadians active and raising money and awareness about heart disease in Canada. But what kind of "heart healthy" messages are emitted, besides the usual litany of eating properly, getting enough exercise and not smoking, things that, incidentally, you should be doing regardless of what your blood pressure is?

Seems to me, one of the key messages focuses on checking your blood pressure.

Deemed the "silent killer," high blood pressure, or hypertension, does play a role in one's chance of having a heart attack or stroke. If I had high blood pressure and my twin brother had normal blood pressure, my increased risk would be about three percent more than his.

Your blood pressure is one of many risk factors, including how overweight you are, whether you smoke, exercise or eat adequate vegetables and fruit, which determine your long-term heart health. Those risk factors seem to get somewhat lost, however, in the enthusiasm over the blood pressure cuff.

Yet, the ritual of people checking and rechecking the pressure of the blood in their arteries is an event repeated millions of times per day in clinics, pharmacies, shopping malls and even

churches around the globe. While all this monitoring seems magically simple, even public spirited, this activity may actually represent the pinnacle of the invasion of medicine into our lives. Some have even called the blood pressure cuff the ultimate symbol of the medicalization of normal life, which takes a person's risk for a disease such as blood pressure and turns it into a disease in and of itself.

But you'll find very few who question the orthodoxy and ask if there may be a downside to getting one's blood pressure checked.

The folks at the Heart and Stroke Foundation maintain that when it comes to your health, "ignorance is bliss, but it can also be deadly, especially for people who don't know they have high blood pressure."

The logic goes like this: if you know what your blood pressure is, and it is "high," that knowledge would naturally motivate you to do something to bring those numbers down — exercise more, eat better, use less salt,

and take your blood pressure drugs and so on.

The obsession with measuring our blood pressure is related to the fact that it is one thing that physicians can more or less control quickly and easily, and it is a practice patients have grown to expect. We have a national love affair with wearing the cuff: in 2001, there were 17.2 million patient visits to office-based physicians for hypertension in Canada, an increase of 30 percent since 1997. According to IMS Canada, a health data company, high blood pressure visits made up almost six percent of all visits to Canadian practitioners.

According to Dr. Norm Campbell, a spokesperson for the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada, and head of Canadian Hypertension Education Program, high blood pressure affects about five million adult Canadians. Stoking public concern over high blood pressure also contributes to a pharmaceutical market of gargantuan proportions, worth \$13 billion globally (2002 figures), and expected to reach \$38.6 billion by 2006. As everyone's blood pressure inevitably creeps higher with age, investment analysts are getting mighty excited about the baby boom bulge "creating a very attractive target group for the pharmaceutical industry." (IMS Health)

*continued on p. 33*

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# Sterile seed sows corporate control

THE ORGANIC WAY • MARYA SKRYPICZAJKO

For centuries, farmers around the world have saved the seed of one year's crop to plant the following year. Now there is pressure from large biotechnology firms and North American governments to allow a relatively new type of plant that produces sterile seed to be test grown in the outdoors, with the ultimate goal of making it available commercially. These trademarked terminator seeds are a serious threat to biodiversity, safe food and farmers' inherent right to grow their own seed.

In 1998, it was discovered that terminator patents had been granted to biotechnology firms in North America. The ensuing public outcry forced the large firms to announce that they would never commercialize the sterile seeds, and in 2000, the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD) adopted a de facto moratorium on terminator seeds.

Environmental groups were appeased and many refocused their efforts on other causes until February 2005, when the Canadian government brought the issue back to the forefront by pushing to overturn the moratorium at another UNCBD. Then, in October 2005, both the Canadian and European Union governments granted new patents for terminator technology jointly to Delta & Pine Land, an American cotton and soybean seed breeder and producer, and the US Department of Agriculture.

Terminator seeds are currently being test-grown in greenhouses in the US. Fortunately, they have not yet made it into fields or the marketplace, but this March, the UNCBD will be in Brazil, and once again there will be pressure to overturn the moratorium.

Terminator seeds are genetically engineered to produce sterile seeds for harvest. Multinational seed and agrochemical companies and the US government have developed them for one purpose: corporate control of agriculture. With plants producing sterile seed, farmers will be forced to buy new seed, year after year.

Since 1996, genetically engineered seed (not terminator) has been available commercially. While the large biotech seed companies have made

a lot of money, they have also dealt with negative pressure from the public regarding the safety of their seed. They have also incurred lawsuits over genetic contamination from cross pollination of their seed with traditional seed varieties. Sterile terminator seeds would allow them to avoid such costly lawsuits. And to soften the current image, the GE industry claims that terminator technology would prevent further genetic contamination.

However, scientists do not agree. To be truly sterile, terminator technology must be 100 percent effective. Thus, the system consisting of many pieces of genetic material engineered into plants must work perfectly over generations of seed breeding. Scientists do not believe it is possible, and insufficient testing has been done to prove otherwise.

Secondly, even if the seed itself is sterile, the pollen from the terminator crops is not, and this could easily move to nearby crops or wild plants and contaminate related open-pollinating varieties. (Canola pollen travels 100 plus km.)

Depending on the crop, the tainted terminator seed could serve as food or feed. All grains and legumes we eat are seed. This means that we would be ingesting the genetic material necessary to render seeds sterile or that it would be fed to livestock that we may eventually consume.

The problems do not end here.

Sterile seeds will not be visibly identifiable; farmers will unwittingly plant sterile seeds, only realizing it when the seeds fail to germinate. By then, it may be too late to reseed a crop and the farmers' yields will fall. This could happen to Canadian farmers or those in developing countries who rely even more on their own seed.

Farmers and gardeners in the poorest areas of the world depend on their own seed for food and medicine. Terminator technology would decrease the availability of many of their necessary crops as they become genetically tainted. This would lead to the loss of their locally adapted crop varieties, their cultural knowledge, and their food sovereignty. Furthermore, it would change the role of women who have

*continued on p. 15*





# Carefully does it!

ON THE GARDEN PATH • CAROLYN HERRIOT

If you have ever put your back out or suffered from tennis elbow or tendonitis, you may want to read on and take note. After a long winter, it's not surprising that gardeners are bursting to get going, but just like plants, we need to come out of dormancy slowly. Here are a few tips to prevent you from regretting your enthusiasm.

- Keep your posture as upright as possible when working in the garden. Bending too much puts a strain on the spine and back muscles. When digging, keep your body upright, and when pushing in the spade, do not bend your back.
- Restrict your exertions to 20 minutes at a time. Then stretch and take a short break.
- When stretching, place your hands on your hips and bend backwards as far as possible, without overdoing it. This puts the back into its normal upright position.
- When lifting and carrying, keep your feet apart for balance, bend the knees to lower yourself and lift the object close to your body. Let the legs do the lifting, not the back.
- Invest in some kneepads, or use a padded mat. Knees can take a beating when it comes to hours of hand weeding.
- Wear strong flexible shoes, which put less strain on calves and heels.
- Invest in padded insoles and wear warm, woolen socks in gumboots. This makes Wellies more comfortable and will insulate your feet against cold and damp.
- If your back is aching or your body is protesting, take a break and treat yourself to a lovely cup of tea.

## Proper pruning practice

A good pruning can make an amazing difference to how plants perform. Pruning helps maintain a pleasing shape, encourages vibrant new growth and results in more flowers. Here are some useful snippy tips:

- Make sure your pruning equipment is sharp. Use scissor-type pruning

shears rather than an anvil-type to prevent unnecessary injury to plant tissues.

- Never forget: the more you prune, the more it grows.
- The goal is to maintain a healthy, productive tree with an aesthetic shape, in an area open to sunlight.
- To avoid spreading disease among plants, disinfect pruning tools using alcohol or hydrogen peroxide.
- Start by pruning out the three Ds: dead, diseased and damaged.
- Remove one of two crossing branches that are rubbing together.
- Remove branches growing into the centre. Keeping an open growth habit is beneficial for good air circulation and the penetration of sunlight.
- Prune no more than 30 percent at one time. Pruning too heavily will produce water sprouts and an overabundance of soft wood.
- Avoid leaving stubs. Not only are they unsightly, but they also invite disease into the plant as they die back.
- Avoid cutting too close and injuring the main stem/trunk.
- Always prune to an outward facing bud or sideshoot to encourage outward growth.
- Cut immediately above a bud or sideshoot, making a sloped cut away from the bud.
- Allow the plant to heal itself. Nobody uses tar paste over pruning cuts.
- Canopy shaping, or crown raising, should happen early while the tree is young and the branches are thin. Avoid pruning large mature branches unless they have broken after a storm or died from disease.

The general rule of thumb for pruning ornamental shrubs is to do it just after flowering. Spring flowering ornamentals produce blossoms on the previous year's growth, so pruning at the right time is essential. Get to know your plants. If branches have buds on them, pruning now means you'll lose all these flowers. Shrubs such as forsythia, philadelphus, weigela and lilac should be pruned in summer, just after they have flowered.

*continued from p. 14*

been the honoured seed keepers, and the relationships between people who once shared and traded food and seed.

Governments do not have to let this happen. They could and should protect our right to safe food.

But since that is not happening, environmental groups and individual citizens are working to strengthen the moratorium on terminator technology.

In Canada, the Ban Terminator campaign is the effort of several non-profit organizations to coordinate opposition to terminator technology. These organizations work together to educate organized groups and the public, forming a strong opposition to the companies and governments who are in favour of commercializing terminator technology. The people involved with Ban Terminator are doing their best to

## ORGANICS

Keep heathers, lavenders, helianthemums and spireas from getting straggly by shearing them back in summer after they bloom. Take a pair of hedge trimmers and give them a rounded or aesthetically pleasing shape, taking care not to cut into old wood. Off with their dead flowerheads for compact, bushy plants next year. It's rewarding to prune *ceanothus* (California lilac), *escallonias* and *hebes*, as these fast-growing shrubs quickly outgrow their allotted space, and pruning gets them back into scale with the garden.

Early spring is the time to cut back shrubs of *Cornus* (dogwoods) and *Salix* (willows). When you prune a branch, these plants respond by sending out two or three sideshoots. Pruned back now, before bud break, to six inches from the ground, *Cornus* and *Salix* will respond by throwing out lots of colourful new shoots. It's these sideshoots that provide the main feature for the winter garden.

Keep in mind the two Js when it comes to clipping evergreen hedges and shrubs (e.g. cedars, laurels, cypresses): January and July are the best months to perform this activity. Early in the year, new growth will soften the closely shorn appearance of a newly cut hedge. In July, the new growth that results from trimming will still have time to mature, before the onset of freezing winter conditions that may damage young shoots.

Yew has the rare capacity of regrowing from mature wood. This means that an older hedge can be trimmed back by hard pruning right to the bare trunk. If done now, by midsummer it will be covered with a delectable fuzz of new green shoots. To prevent over stressing overgrown yews, do only one side at a time, and wait a season before pruning the other side. Temporary lopsidedness beats complete destruction!

*Excerpted from A Year on the Garden Path: A 52-Week Organic Gardening Guide by Carolyn Herriot. \$29.95. Earthfuture Publications, Victoria, BC. Available at Banyen Books, Duthie Books, or at [www.earthfuture.com/gardenpath](http://www.earthfuture.com/gardenpath)*

make their voices heard loud and clear at the upcoming UNCBD.

If you would like to get involved, visit [www.banterminator.org](http://www.banterminator.org) for more information and write to your MP and the Canadian Minister of Agriculture with your views.

*Marya Skrypiczajko is the author of BC the Organic Way – Where to Find Organic Food in British Columbia. [www.bctheorganicway.com](http://www.bctheorganicway.com)*



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# A good year for evolution

SCIENCE MATTERS • DAVID SUZUKI

Last year wasn't an easy year for evolution, but it was a good one. In the US, legislation to promote the teaching of "intelligent design" in schools as an alternative to evolution was introduced in more than a dozen states. But the end of the year brought court victories for evolutionists and evolutionary research was heralded as the "breakthrough of the year" by the journal *Science*.

Wait, didn't Darwin make that breakthrough well over a century ago? Certainly, but we must never forget that most of our understanding of biology stems from this original discovery. As geneticist Theodosius Dobzhansky (1900-1975) once said, "Nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of evolution."

That light shone brightly in 2005. In the fall, researchers published the DNA sequence of the entire chimpanzee genome, enabling scientists to compare the genetic structure of humans to our closest living relatives. This research will not only help us understand human evolution, but could provide important clues as to why humans are so much more

susceptible than chimpanzees to problems like heart disease, AIDS and malaria.

Other research in 2005 focused on the evolutionary development of different species and how species split into two. From birds like the European blackcap, to fish like the stickleback, and insects like the fruit fly, researchers gained new insights into how evolution works and what causes species to either stay together or become something new.

One key insight has been the increased understanding of the importance of non-coding DNA in speciation. This DNA does not contain instructions needed to make proteins and had no known function, so it was often labelled as "junk." But we now know that the biggest genetic differences between chimpanzees and humans are found in non-coding DNA, and research into fruit flies has found that physical traits unique to certain fruit fly species can be produced in others by selectively swapping non-coding DNA.

Evolutionary research is vital to understanding our world. That's why scientists across the US were thrilled

in December when a federal judge prevented the teaching of intelligent design in biology classes in Dover, Pennsylvania. The judge reasoned that the theory, which claims that a "higher force" than evolution is responsible for the creation and development of complex organisms, is nothing more than poorly disguised creationism.

In spite of the court victory, it was a challenging year for science education in the US. As Donald Kennedy, editor of *Science*, recently wrote: "The rising tide of evangelical Christianity and its alliance with a conservative political movement seemed to foreshadow a national suspicion of science or a deep confusion about what science is or isn't."

Other criticisms were even more direct. For example, a report by the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation in Washington DC, warned, "Science education in America is under attack." The report gave failing grades for science education in 15 states, including Alabama, where biology textbooks are adorned with stickers that proclaim evolution a "controversial" theory.

Discussing intelligent design is certainly appropriate at a university level. In fact, one study published this fall in *Bioscience* found that university students exposed to arguments for both evolution and for intelligent design were actually more likely to favour evolution than those taught evolution alone. In other words, when it comes to advanced education, addressing belief systems rather than ignoring them could be an important teaching tool.

However, it's completely inappropriate to introduce religion into science studies for younger students whose capacity for critical thought has yet to develop. Canadians should be thankful that our country is, by and large, free of such debates. But the fact that it again reared its head so close to home means we have to be even more vigilant in ensuring that politics and religion do not cloud our teaching of science. Because when that happens, it is students who lose the most.

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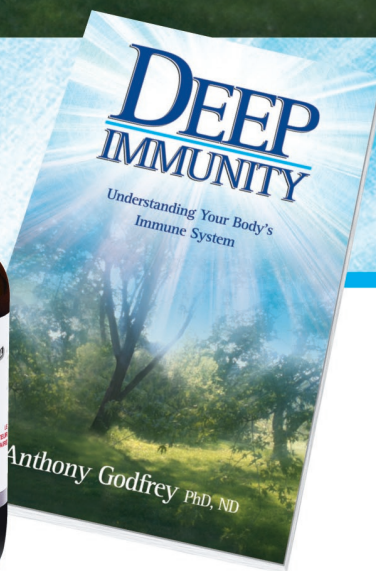


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# Cutting down on carbon

EARTHFUTURE.COM • GUY DAUNCEY

Far away in Bhutan, villagers in the Phobjikha Valley have chosen to become guardians of the endangered black-necked crane whose wintering grounds are close by. Like many villagers in the developing world, they obtain their evening light from kerosene, but in 2003, some families formed a partnership with the Solar Electric Light Fund and installed small solar photovoltaic (PV) lighting systems. Now, they monitor the crane's movements on solar-powered computers as well.

My connection with Bhutan is linked to global climate change. I strive to live an environmentally sound lifestyle, but when I calculated my carbon emissions for 2005, as I do each year, I found that I still produced 15 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>, mostly generated by flying to speak at conferences on global climate change.

GCC is the greatest challenge we face. We must find a way to reduce our emissions. I do what I can, eating a vegetarian diet, cycling where possible and sharing in the use of our car, but at the end of the year, I've still got 15 tonnes hanging over me, like a colossus casting its shadow over future generations. So I neutralize the CO<sub>2</sub>, by paying to help others reduce their emissions by that much.

Here's how I calculate my emissions. For our car, I take the year's mileage, use its fuel efficiency to tell me how many litres of fuel we burned, and calculate the CO<sub>2</sub> at 2.5 kg per litre. (For diesel, 2.85 kg). My share comes to two tonnes. If you use the bus, calculate your share at 186 kg per 1,000 km. For a daily commute of 10 km (50 km a week), that's 465 kg of CO<sub>2</sub> a year.

Our home and businesses are fully electric, so I add up the kilowatt-hours we used in 2005. BC Hydro's power is 90 percent hydroelectric, but 10 percent comes from gas or coal in BC and Alberta. Each kWh of gas-fired power produces 0.19 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>, and each kWh of coal-fired power produces 0.97 kg, so assuming a 50/50 split (0.58 kg per kWh), my share comes to 410 kg.

In gas-fired heating, each gigajoule produces 50 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>. The average household uses five GJ a month, producing three tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> a year. For

oil, each litre produces 2.8 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>.

I include a total for garbage, which produces methane and which is 23 times more powerful a greenhouse gas than CO<sub>2</sub>. Every kg of garbage produces one kg of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent. If a typical black bag weighs 2 kg, and you're a one-bag-a-week household, that's 104 kg of CO<sub>2</sub> for the year.

Then, there's all that flying. There's no easy way to calculate this, and there are very different estimates of how much CO<sub>2</sub> flying produces, ranging from 0.11 to 0.38 kilograms of CO<sub>2</sub> per kilometre. I use 0.30. I list my trips, and then go to

[www.carbonneutral.com](http://www.carbonneutral.com), which tells me the flight distance. I tally up the totals and multiply by 0.30. In 2005, my flights produced 9.6 tonnes.

Finally, I add a chunk for my share of the industry and transport that was needed for the things I bought and ate. It's hard to calculate this, so I assume 2.5 tonnes. A meat-based diet is responsible for 1.5 tonnes more CO<sub>2</sub> per year than a vegan diet; so if you eat meat, add this to your emissions. (0.5 tonnes for a vegetarian diet, 0 for vegan.)

To neutralize my 15 tonnes, I send a cheque to the Solar Electric

Light Fund, which helps villagers in places like Bhutan to install solar PV for lighting, reducing kerosene use. The price works out to \$12 per tonne, so my donation for 2005 was \$180. [www.self.org](http://www.self.org)

There are other ways to neutralize your emissions. You could plant trees through Trees Canada ([www.treecanada.ca](http://www.treecanada.ca)); support wind energy in the US through Native Energy ([www.nativeenergy.com](http://www.nativeenergy.com)); choose to give to one of a variety of renewable energy projects with Climate Care ([www.climatecare.org](http://www.climatecare.org); [www.offsetters.ca](http://www.offsetters.ca) in Canada); or support reforestation through the World Land Trust ([www.carbonbalanced.org](http://www.carbonbalanced.org)).

It would be better if I reduced my emissions to zero, but until then, being carbon-neutral is a good second best.

Guy Dauncey is president of the BC Sustainable Energy Association ([www.bcsea.org](http://www.bcsea.org)), publisher of EcoNews, and author of Stormy Weather: 101 Solutions to Global Climate Change. [www.earthfuture.com](http://www.earthfuture.com)

BC CO<sub>2</sub> Calculator Summary Chart

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# The circle of life

UNIVERSE WITHIN • GWEN RANDALL-YOUNG

Somehow, I ended up with three cats. First there were only two, but there were three children, one of whom convinced me that the ratio of children to cats should be equal. That was all about 16 years ago.

They have been healthy cats and have done a fine job of running the household and keeping us all in line. Then, suddenly, just before New Year's, one of them was not herself. She had no energy and could barely hold up her head. This seemed to happen from one day to the next, as she had seemed quite fine until then.

A trip to the vet revealed a large abdominal mass and a poor prognosis. Sweetie had always been a very special cat. At age six, my youngest daughter named her Sweetie because she looked into that little cat face and it was just so sweet! There was an unusual bond between these two. Sweetie slept with her every night and sat right beside her at every opportunity. As my youngest grew older and was out of the house more often, Sweetie would meow to make me follow her up to the empty bedroom. She would look at me with a look that was both puzzled and demanding. She did not like it when Tasha was not here.

If Tasha were away for a week, Sweetie would sleep faithfully on her bed every night, keeping it warm until she returned. Sweetie was euthanized New Year's Eve, exactly one week before Tasha was to leave for Italy on a three-month university exchange. That would have been very hard for such a devoted cat. Did she know?

Of course, I was very sad. It was like the beginning of the end of an era. The cats represented the years of a full house with children and pets. I realized the era has been ending for a while. It has been quite a few years since my two eldest have been out on their own. It is different with Sweetie though, for this is final.

As hard as it was to go through this process, Sweetie was a teacher. At the

vet's, she looked around a bit, looked right into my eyes as if to say goodbye and then just lay down. As the vet prepared her for the injection, she did not resist in the slightest. In fact, she lay down her head as though she were surrendering to sleep. It was very peaceful. We cried a lot and the rest of the day was very hard. By the next day, there was a sense that all was in divine order. It was her time and she did not suffer.

It made me think about all the letting go we must do throughout life. Of course, as we age, there is more and more that we either let go of, or that which simply slips away. It seems that every letting go prepares us for the final letting go, when we must let go of everything, while life goes on for the living.

Tasha will go off to Italy and begin a new adventure. The other two cats, we know, are nearing the end of their lives. My parents are aging and my children are starting to have children. The circle of life keeps going around and around.

One day, we all will lay down our heads for the last time. We will live on in the memories of those who knew us, and eventually there will be no one left who was directly acquainted with us. To recognize this, and not be saddened by it, is what coming to terms with our own mortality is all about.

Once we have done that and have no more fear about the transient nature of our existence, we are free to truly embrace the joy and the miracle of the human experience.

We are free to release all that is unimportant and to focus on our loving relationships with other living beings. In the end, that is all that matters, and by then, we realize that is all that ever mattered.

Gwen Randall-Young is an author and psychotherapist in private practice. For more articles or information about her books and CDs, visit www.gwen.ca. See display ad in this issue.

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# Chemicals in sports: What price fame?

WISE TEENS

*The following dialogue has been excerpted from a discussion between Dr. M.L. Mason, editor of Teensmag for Alcohol and Drug Abuse Education and Prevention, and student athletes attending a suburban Toronto secondary school.*

**Dr. Mason:** When I was a young student athlete a long time ago, I had no knowledge of, or access to, performance-enhancing chemicals. So I never had to face the ethical decisions you people have to make.

**Tim:** Yeah, it's not as cut and dried as some think. There can be big bucks at the end of the rainbow.

**Jake:** But what about your health? Doc, I hear horror stories about long-term effects.

**Dr. Mason:** It's a phenomenon that only started a couple of decades ago and needs to have quantified longitudinal or long-term health measurements

done. So far, we only have anecdotal feedback, but it doesn't look good. Heart, liver and reproductive organ breakdown. And don't forget depression. That young male Texas athlete who committed suicide recently.

**Amy** (shuddering): That's scary! Why would anyone want to use 'roids knowing the risks?

**Tim:** That's easy. Look at Rick there. If he wants to make the Argos, he'll need to bulk up 30 pounds. It's quick and easy with the 'roids. Some guys feel a little risk can lead to millions.

**Rick** (laughing): Sure, sure. No way, man. I don't want a heart attack before I'm 50.

**Tim:** Doc, what about blood doping? Is that as dangerous?

**Dr. Mason:** Possibly, but we need more studies. There are many ways of doing it. But tell me, isn't that still unethical?

**Amy:** Sure it is. It's playing with a rigged deck.

**Jake:** It makes you cynical. Every day or so in the sports pages, you read about these pharma-freaks like Barry Bonds or Marion Jones.

**Rick:** There's something else we

haven't discussed. The humiliation you suffer when you get exposed. Like Jason Giambi, baseball's most valuable player a couple of years ago and now just a broken down bum.

**Dr. Mason:** Maybe that's a bit harsh. Still, did the steroids cause his diminished capabilities when he stopped using them? Certainly, his production stats went way, way down.

**Rick:** Who knows? But it's enough to warn any athlete with any smarts at all.

**Dr. Mason:** It seems to boil down to that siren song named money. Take what you can get away with as long as the bucks come in.

**Jake:** Is it too late to stop it? They say seven percent of 750 major league baseball players have been detected using enhancers, but how many more are doing it undetected as yet?

**Rick:** No matter if 90 percent do it, it doesn't make it right.

**Amy:** Let's hope it's only a phase.

**Tim** (interrupting): Oh, then something else will come along.

**Amy** (angrily): We'll just have to be on our watch.

**Dr. Mason:** It seems we all agree that

nothing good ethically or physically can result from anyone's getting involved with performance-enhancing drugs. And it's sad when athlete role models like the two Greek Olympic sprinters insist on covering up their misdeeds by denials or a famous ballplayer says in San Francisco that he thought he was taking herbals. Thanks for setting a good example. Have a fun, drug-free athletic career.

*Reprinted with permission from Teensmag, a publication written by teens about alcohol and drug abuse education and prevention. Teensmag editor and publisher Dr. Merv Mason is a psychologist with many years experience in alcohol and drug abuse education and prevention. This publication is a useful resource tool in helping to educate teens against the dangers of substance abuse. Over the past 17 years, it has made a significant contribution to enhancing awareness about prevention. Through corporate sponsorship, Teensmag is distributed throughout secondary schools in BC, police detachments, the aboriginal community and substance abuse centres.*

## Newsbites

### Google censored in China

Google Inc., worth about \$54 billion, has agreed to censor its results in Mainland China in exchange for better access to the world's fastest growing market.

A Chinese-language version of Google's search engine was previously available through the company's dot-com address but now Google.cn has become widely available inside China and easy to use. Because of government barriers set up to suppress information, Google's China users previously have been blocked from using the search engine.

Tibet's struggles, Taiwan

independence, the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre and non-government approved news services are among forbidden subjects. Google's decision rankled Reporters Without Borders, a media watchdog group that has sharply criticized Internet companies including Yahoo and Microsoft's MSN.com for submitting to China's censorship regime.

Neither Google email nor blogs are being offered through Google.cn because of fears the government could force the company to turn over personal information on customers. Yahoo came under fire last year after it provided the government with the email account

information of a Chinese journalist who was later convicted for violating state secrecy laws.

### The Land Conservancy joins fight to save Kogawa House

Community efforts to save Joy Kogawa's childhood home from the wrecking ball moved into a new phase as The Land Conservancy of British Columbia (TLC) agreed to lead the \$1.25-million fundraising campaign to acquire the house and secure its protection. The Kogawa house was the childhood home of Canadian author Joy Kogawa. She and her family were

removed from the home in 1942 as part of the government's internment of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War. Kogawa's novel *Obasan*, in which the house is featured, is a powerful story of that internment. The Save Kogawa House Committee and other community groups were able to convince the City of Vancouver to delay demolition of the house until the end of March to give the community time to raise the funds to buy it. TLC is calling on anyone who has been moved by Joy Kogawa's writing, or touched by Canada's past treatment of the Japanese-Canadian community, to contribute to

*continued on p. 33*

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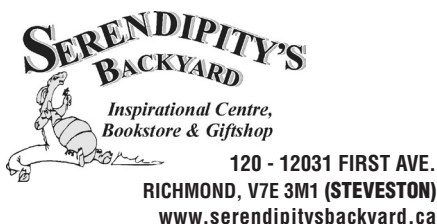
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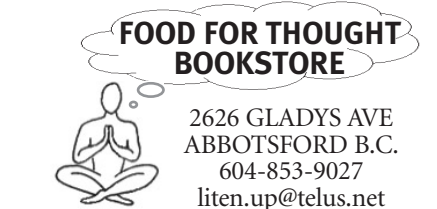
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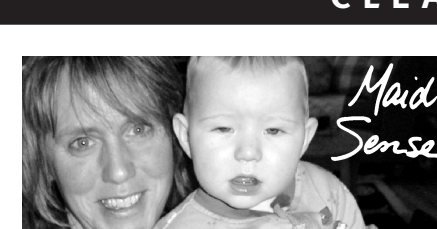
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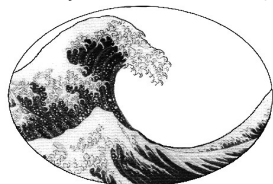
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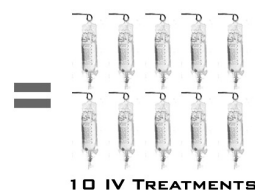


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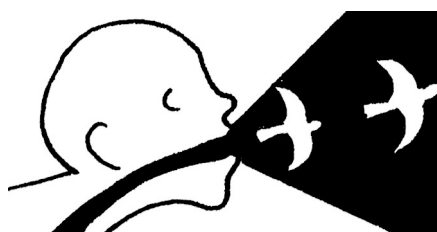
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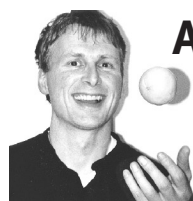
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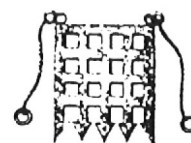


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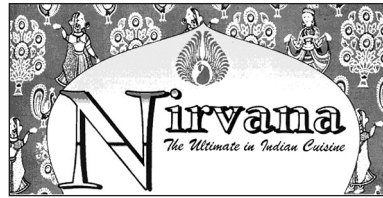


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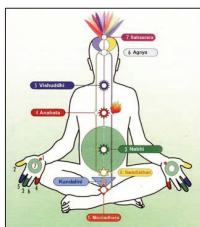
**Science of Spirituality** is a multi-faith international organization dedicated to love, unity and peace under the direction of Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj.

Sant Rajinder Singh is a world-renowned spiritual Master, who teaches a simple yet transformative meditation technique for all.

All SOS programs are FREE.

**Every Sunday - 9100 Van Horne Way, Richmond** (corner Great Canadian Way & Van Horne - East entrance). 10 AM Meditation, 11AM Spiritual Discourse (Satsang) Judy: 604-530-0589

**NEW in Kitsilano.** Friday evenings 7 to 9 PM. Meditation & Satsang 1805 Larch St. (West 2nd Ave.) Downstairs - enter from lane off parking lot. Brian: 604-992-6044 "Love is contagious. Be a carrier." Sant Rajinder Singh [www.sos.org](http://www.sos.org)



**Sahaja Yoga Meditation**  
"Sahaja Yoga is different from other Yogas because it begins with SELF REALIZATION. It is important for everyone to have that knowledge of the roots within ourselves. Sahaja Yoga allows the individual to become his own Spiritual Guide."  
- H. H. Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi

"I have been practising SY for over 13 years and this became a way of life for me. Being a physician I had been absorbing Sahaj knowledge slowly but surely since all my questions, doubts and dilemmas were answered. My life became rich of people, love and optimism. My personality shifted from being shy, uncertain and fearful to optimistic, open

and balanced. The biggest gift I ever received was self-realization and a chance to become a yogi-connected with my Own Spirit."

- **Dr. I. Fadyeyeva**, Business Development Manager, GN, Hearing Care

**FREE meditation classes.** 604-597-8440, 604-715-8888, 604-726-8149 & 604-980-8107. [www.sahajayoga.org](http://www.sahajayoga.org) 604-507-1727

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1A - 320 Columbia Street, New Westminster  
604-521-6336  
[www.isacanada.ca](http://www.isacanada.ca)  
e-mail: [theisacanada@yahoo.ca](mailto:theisacanada@yahoo.ca)



**WEDNESDAY EVENTS** 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm • **HEALING** 7 pm  
**SUNDAY SERVICES** 11:00 am - See DATEBOOK: Sundays

### WEDNESDAYS AT THE ISA

Feb 01 - Mediumship ~ Glenda McLeod & Janis Soparlo  
Feb 08 - Open Circle ~ Anne Beveridge  
Feb 15 - Mediumship ~ Mary Brooks  
Feb 22 - Practise Your Evolving Abilities 2 ~  
You give the messages - Joyce Tarvin  
**MEMBERS \$7 • NON-MEMBERS \$8**

### SPRING MINI-READINGS

**Saturday, March 4, 2006 ~ 11 am - 3:30 pm**  
First 15-minute reading \$20 • Second reading \$17  
Half hour with same reader \$35  
Please book readings at the Center by 2 pm

### BRITISH MEDIUM EILEEN DAVIES

**Mediumship Demonstration ~ Mar. 31 - 7:30 pm**  
\$25 in advance  
**Mediumship Workshop ~ April 1 - 10 am to 4 pm**  
\$65 members; \$70 non-members  
**Sunday Service ~ April 2 - 11 am**

### Unitarian Congregations of Greater Vancouver



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**South Fraser Unitarian Congregation** (Surrey): 604-512-9032 or [www.sfuc.bc.ca](http://www.sfuc.bc.ca)  
**Unitarian Church of Vancouver:** 604-261-7204 or [www.vancouver.unitarians.ca](http://www.vancouver.unitarians.ca)



**ART OF  
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[www.artofliving.org](http://www.artofliving.org)

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SEMINAR ROOM  
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Beautiful park with trees 1/2 block away. Grass side yard with patio and flowers. **Free parking.** Centrally located. 23rd and Oak area, Vancouver. **Call to view 604-264-0714.**





**Philip Glass: "the man who changed modern music"**  
— Village Voice

*continued from p. 10*

world. Einstein said "I think the fish will be the last to know water." I don't think it would take much of a stretch of the imagination to say that the modern citizen will be the last to know technology, the reason being that it's no longer something we use, but something we live. The popular myth of neutrality, that technology is "neutral" and it's the use or misuse of it that determines its value, I think is woefully inadequate.

Modern technology was devised, I guess, as a buffer from the ravages of nature, which is at once beautiful and horrible. But instead, it separated us completely from nature to the point that now technology is our new nature — instead of anima mundi, it's techno mundi. Mystery is gone to the certainty of technological principles. So the real terror, the real aggression against life comes in the form of the pursuit of our technological happiness.

**Well, how do we do that?**

I strongly believe that our world is our range of relationships, and I believe more in direct experience or direct action as opposed to more generalized committees and international forums. Nothing changes the world more conclusively than the shining light of a good example, and what we can do in our own lives is only limited by the imaginations that we have. We're all capable of walking on water, of moving mountains — if not literally, certainly metaphorically — by the actions we take. I try to shield myself from the blinding light, the new sun of technology, [instead] seeking the darkness and ambiguity of a formless world out of which a new form can be created. In that sense, I think the most practical thing we can do is be idealistic.

**What have you learned throughout the process of making the *Qatsi* Trilogy?**

I learned that there are an enormous number of people that feel what I've just been talking about, but somehow do not have the words or the ability to describe to themselves what's happening. As a result, we're all walking around, myself included, in an altered state. But I trust that deeper level of instinct. Many people can sense that something is woefully out of balance in the world in which we live. That is encouraging to me. Our finest moment is when we know that which determines our behaviour, when we know that which is oppressing us. That's our freest moment, as contradictory as that might sound.

*Godfrey Reggio is a frequent lecturer on philosophy, technology and film. He resides in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Philip Glass and the Philip Glass Ensemble will be playing the score of Koyaanisqatsi live at a special screening of the movie in Vancouver, presented by International Arts Initiatives at Queen Elizabeth Theatre, February 23 at 8 pm, Ticketmaster.ca or 604-280-4444, www.mundomundo.com*

*This is an edited version of an interview that originally appeared in the August 2003 issue of Satya, a magazine of vegetarianism, environmentalism, animal advocacy and social justice, www.satyamag.com. Reprinted with permission.*

# DATEBOOK

List at: [www.commonground.ca](http://www.commonground.ca) > Advertising > Datebook

**FEB 3-4**  
**Vijnana Yoga with Hollyhock's Elizabeth Burr.** Meditation, pranayama, asana and anatomy explorations for a quiet mind, relaxed body and open heart. All levels welcome! Fri. 3, 6:30-9:30 pm; Sat. 4, 9:30-4:30 pm. \$135. 1-800-933-6339 or [registration@hollyhock.ca](mailto:registration@hollyhock.ca)

**FEB 8**  
**The Vancouver Inter-Cultural Orchestra** presents The Musical Marriages of the Far East with Randy Raine-Reusch and Mei Han, 7 pm, Central Library, 350 W. Georgia, Peter Kaye room. Free. [www.vi-co.org](http://www.vi-co.org)

**FEB 9**  
**Shared Sacred Space:** a dialogue to explore the sacred by the InterSpiritual Centre and SFU Wosk Centre for Dialogue. Douglas Todd to speak. Art. Music. 6:30-9:30 pm, \$55. 604-268-7925.

**FEB 4**  
**Cassius Khan: a live performance of Indian Classical** Ghazals, Qawwalis and Kathak dance, 8 pm Quaker Hall, 70th & Osler, \$20adv/\$25dr. Call 778-883-9641 or 604-785-5341, [www.cassiuskhan.impendo.com](http://www.cassiuskhan.impendo.com)

**FEB 14**  
**Shamanic Drumming & Dreaming Circle** — Saturday, February 14, 7 pm. Journeywork for insight and healing. Vancouver Multi-Cultural Centre, 1254 W. 7th. Donation. Turtle Island Healing Circles. 604-418-9636. [www.drumcircles.ca](http://www.drumcircles.ca)

**FEB 15**  
**World Peace Forum 2006 Dialogue Series** Wed. 7pm. Ensure Canada upholds its commitments to peace, and what we can do in Vancouver. Kitsilano Secondary School 2550 W.10th Ave, 604-687-3223 [www.worldpeaceforum.ca](http://www.worldpeaceforum.ca)

**FEB 17-19**  
**Laughter Yoga Leader Training** with Allan O'Meara. Feb in Vancouver. March 10-12 in Victoria. April 21-23 in Nanaimo. 604-721-4562. [www.lolyoga.com](http://www.lolyoga.com)

**FEB 22**  
**Silva Method Presentation Conference.** UBC Robson Sq. 7 pm. Free Admission. 3 Day Seminar March 4, 5 & 11 [info@silvamethod-canada.com](mailto:info@silvamethod-canada.com) 604-925-0816. See Event Section for Seminar info.

**FEB 23**  
**Philip Glass Ensemble: Koyaanisqatsi Live:** a special screening of Godfrey Reggio's masterpiece with score performed live by composer Philip Glass, 8 pm, Queen Elizabeth Theatre, Ticketmaster.ca or 604-280-4444. [www.mundomundo.com](http://www.mundomundo.com)

**FEB 23, MAR 2, 16 & 30**  
**Transform Your Communication Classes:** Learn effective communication skills that will enhance your relationship with your: lover, children, family, friends & workplace. (7:30-9 pm) Nicklas: MSW, RCC, 25 yrs. Experience. SAVE: limited registration before Feb. 13. [www.ehrlichandassociates.com](http://www.ehrlichandassociates.com) 604-990-1584.

**FEB 24**  
**FrequenSea** New! Phytoplankton for human consumption. "The future of nutrition is found in the ocean"— Jacques Cousteau. Info Eve. Holiday Inn Express 2889 E Hastings (near PNE) 7-8:30pm Free Amelia 682-2838 Call for other loc's. [www.FrequenSea.com/yes](http://www.FrequenSea.com/yes)

**FEB 24-26**  
**Rosen Method "Conscious Touch"** is a gentle, respectful hands-on form of bodywork. Talk

& Demonstration Fri. 7-9:30 pm, \$15 led by Bill Samsel & Mariette Berinstein. Weekend Workshop, \$185, 535 West 10th Ave. 1-877-855-0179. Register at [www.rosen-method-canada.com](http://www.rosen-method-canada.com)

**FEB 24-27**  
**Transformational Healing Retreat:** Receive In-Depth Healing, Transformation Hatha Yoga, learn a Healing Breath. Relax, de-tense and rejuvenate at our beautiful Retreat Centre. SRMH Centre, Sunshine Coast, 1-604-740-0898.

**FEB 25**  
**Laughter Boot Camp!** Surrey Guildford Sheraton Hotel 10-4 pm. 4-hour comedy workshop, gourmet lunch, professional improv show! \$99. The Comedy Factory, 604-726-5668. [www.thecomedyfactory.ca](http://www.thecomedyfactory.ca)

**FEB 25**  
**Conscious Connections Social Club:** A community of holistic, fun loving and caring people where kindred spirits meet to share common interests. Social Mixer Sat. Feb 25. [www.consciousconnectionsocialclub.com](http://www.consciousconnectionsocialclub.com)

**FEB 25**  
**Chantfest 2006 Vancouver InterSpiritual Chant Festival** benefit for InterSpiritual Centre. Full day of Chantshops from 10 am. Evening Chant, 7:30 pm. Doors open 7 pm. Shaughnessy Heights United Church, 1550 W. 33rd Ave. Full pass \$35. Evening chant \$15/\$12. Tickets at Banyen Books or call 604-737-8858.

**FEB 27**  
**DNA Healing/ Genetic Repair** Roundhouse 7-8:30pm Healing Meditation with Sound, Sacred Geometry. Info Eve. Free. Amelia 682-2838

**MAR 1-21**  
**Opportunity to transform** unconsciousness into consciousness in 21 days. Intensive Workshop mornings 6-7:30 am daily with medical intuitive & healer Mada Dalian. Full details [www.dalianmethod.com](http://www.dalianmethod.com), 604-261-7719.

**MAR 3-5**  
**Boundaries in the Workplace** workshop at the Haven Institute. 1-877-247-9238. [www.boundaries.ca](http://www.boundaries.ca)

**MAR 3, 4, & 5**  
**Introduction to Foot Reflexology** commences Certificate Weekend Course. Intro, \$10, Course \$295, Pacific Institute of Reflexology, 604-875-8818.

**MAR 5**  
**WAH!** Come and join us for an enchanting evening of music, chanting and meditation with performer Wah! Sunday at 7pm. Tickets \$20. Contact Samadhi Yoga Centre @ 604-945-9642 or [info@myyoga.ca](mailto:info@myyoga.ca)

**MAR 7, 14, 21 & 28**  
**Transform Your Life Classes:** Learn exercises that reduce stress, increase energy & enhance: fitness, weight loss, health, productivity, focus, balanced emotions & relationships. Learn: Qi Gong, Energy Healing Tech., Meditation, EFT (Emotional Freedom Tech.), Self-Hypnosis, Brain-Gym, etc. (7:30-9 pm. FREE computer stress assessment with group. Nicklas: MSW, RCC, 25 yrs. Experience SAVE: limited registration before Feb. 21. [www.ehrlichandassociates.com](http://www.ehrlichandassociates.com) 604-990-1584.

**MAR 8 & 15**  
**Healing Workshop** Mar 8. **Meditation Workshop** Mar 15. We offer private Psychic readings, healings, psychic demo, meditation hour and classes. CDM Psychic Institute 1114 W. Broadway, Suite 202, 604-730-8788.

**MAR 9 – APR 8**  
**Into the Heart of the Sangoma, written by and starring Ann Mortifee,** presented by Arts Club Theatre Company. Granville Island Stage, 1585 Johnston St. Tickets \$25-\$35.50. Discounts for students/seniors/groups. Ticketmaster, 604-280-3311 or the Arts Club box office, 604-687-1644. [www.artsclub.com](http://www.artsclub.com)

**MAR 10**  
**Voices For The Front Lines Benefit Concert** for the Stephen Lewis Foundation, St. Andrews Wesley United Church, (1022 Nelson/Burrard) 8 pm. Tickets \$25/\$15/\$10, info, 604-683-4574, [www.festivalboxoffice.com](http://www.festivalboxoffice.com) 604-257-0366

**MAR 12**  
**New Product Launch in Canada:** The First Natural Stem Cell Enhancer, StemEnhance(tm). Free seminar. Venue TBA. Speaker: Christian Drapeau, MSc, StemTech HealthSciences Inc. Info/Reg: 604-722-6599. [www.healthwise@naturalstemcellhealth.com](mailto:www.healthwise@naturalstemcellhealth.com) [www.vancouver.naturalstemcellhealth.com](http://www.vancouver.naturalstemcellhealth.com)

**MAR 15-19**  
**Rosen Method Movement Workshop** is an enjoyable form for exploring and improving flexibility, muscle function and breathing. 9:30 am - 4:30 pm, Sechelt BC. Tuition \$550. Housing available. Toll free: 1-877-855-0179, register online [www.rosenmethod-canada.com](http://www.rosenmethod-canada.com)

**MAR 17-18**  
**An Interactive Time with Miceal Ledwith:** Beyond What the Bleep & The Da Vinci Code. Fri 7:30-9 pm, \$25. Sat 10-4:30 pm, \$100. Fri & Sat \$110. Mary Winspear Centre, 2243 Beacon Ave, Sidney, 250-544-0005.

**MAR 17-18**  
**Writing with Linda Solomon:** Opening to dramatic moments in our own lives as sources for great fiction and memoirs. Inspiring for all writers! \$135. Call 800-933-6339 or [registration@hollyhock.ca](mailto:registration@hollyhock.ca)

**MAR 17, 18 & 19**  
**Introduction to Hand Reflexology** commences Certificate Weekend Course. Intro, \$10, Course \$295, Pacific Institute of Reflexology, 604-875-8818.

**APR 1-2**  
**Awakening the Third Eye,** The Gate that leads within: Workshop in Vancouver to learn a systematic process to develop your third eye, meditate and develop spiritual vision. \$190/wknd. 607-821-1727 [www.clairvisionschool.org](http://www.clairvisionschool.org)

**APR 7-8**  
**C-ING the future with Margaret Wheatley:** Acclaimed author, innovator, & speaker presents two days of discovery & possibilities about relationships and community. Co-presented with the Haven Institute faculty. Downtown Vancouver. Fri. keynote, \$49. Sat. sessions, \$99. Symposium package, \$129. Call 877-247-9238 (ext 234) or [www.haven.ca](http://www.haven.ca)

**MAY 5-7**  
**Forgiveness and Respect:** a weekend workshop and weekly Vancouver Teachings & Ceremonies with Dream Blazer Shamanic Medicine. \$5 min. donation. 604-221-6637 or [dreamblazer@dccnet.com](mailto:dreamblazer@dccnet.com)

**MAY 15-JUN 11**  
**Yoga Teacher Training** with Shakti Mhi: 28-day intensive, Yoga Alliance registered. Vancouver

Island. Free room & board for first 8 applicants. 604-682-2121. [www.pranayoga.com](http://www.pranayoga.com)

## SUNDAYS

**The Centre for Spiritual Living** uniting the world in love. Inspired by the teachings of Deepak Chopra and Louise Hay? You'll love our Sunday services, 11 am. Children welcome. 1495 W. 8th Ave., Vancouver, 604-321-1225. [www.cslvancouver.com](http://www.cslvancouver.com)

**International Spiritualist Alliance:** #1A - 320 Columbia Street, New West (Downstairs) 604-521-6336. Sunday services, 11 am. Rev. Joyce Tarvin, 604-433-6663. See Resource Directory. [www.isacanada.ca](http://www.isacanada.ca)

## TUESDAYS

**Pranic Healing Clinics:** Non-touch energy healing. By donation. Tuesdays 11 am - 3 pm and 6-9 pm. 2950 Laurel St, Vancouver. Closed last Tuesday of month. 604-988-1102. [www.pranichealing.ca/vancouver](http://www.pranichealing.ca/vancouver)

**Reflexology Student Clinic** sessions, only \$18. Evenings only. By appointment. Pacific Institute of Reflexology. 604-875-8818.

## WEDNESDAYS

**Hawaiian Healing Night:** 7 pm. Hawaiian guided meditation, Sharing the Aloha and snacks afterward. Meet like-minded people and share. \$5 donation. At Hale Ola, a place of Healing, 1215 Madison Ave., Burnaby. 604-431-7474, Kaimana and Moanikeala.

**Meditation & Self-inquiry:** Have you lost the balance and rhythm in your life? Let stillness (through self-inquiry) return your wholeness. 5-7 pm. 604-317-1613.

**Children of War fundraiser: Chai Gallery at East is East** hosts a fundraiser for Children of War ([www.thechildrenofwar.org](http://www.thechildrenofwar.org)) featuring local musicians & traditional dancers. Every Wed. evening, 7:30 pm - 1:30 am, 3243 W. Broadway. Tickets at door or call 778-837-1862. By donation.

## THURSDAYS

**Pranic Healing Clinic:** Non-touch energy healing. By donation. West Vancouver United Church, 2062 Esquimalt Ave. (at 21st). Thursdays 10 am - 2 pm. Closed last Thursday of month. 604-988-1102, [www.pranichealing.ca/vancouver](http://www.pranichealing.ca/vancouver)

## ONGOING

**Bliss in Motion & Music:** Classes With Navaro. River of Rhythm Drumming & Tribal Bliss Ecstatic Dance. (Live accompaniment Pepe Danza & friends). 604-434-1403. [navaro@tribal-bliss.com](mailto:navaro@tribal-bliss.com)

**Free Meditation Workshop:** Experience Kundalini awakening through Sahaja Yoga, as taught by Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi & enjoy your Powers at our Weekly classes, always free and open to all. 604-597-8440. [www.sahajayoga.org](http://www.sahajayoga.org)

**Women's Spirituality:** personal support for your conscious awakening. Energy attunement, guidance, meditation, creativity, customized healing art. Highly intuitive transformational therapist. North Van, near Seabus. 604-980-8132.





# On track zodiac

FEBRUARY 2006 • ILONA HEDI GRANIK



**ARIES** (Mar 21 – Apr 19)

You might feel that the hands of fate are pulling strings for you. Many synchronistic events have you believing in kismet. You could make some lasting changes if you start reeling in the good vibrations. Channel your highest good and keep your eye on the sparrow. There is wisdom in every tiny thing.



**TAURUS** (Apr 20 – May 21)

You would like to throw down that flying carpet and create a home. The merry-go-round has worn out its hinges and you may want to get off and have more stability. You almost forgot what it was like to push your toes into the sand. Breathe a sigh of relief as you find ways to relax and settle.



**GEMINI** (May 22 – Jun 20)

Don't push the river, and keep your kite in the air. Try not to give up on your projects even when the task seems daunting. Make lemonade out of lemons instead of showing your fists to the gods. Master these feisty times with creativity and deliver your best results.



**CANCER** (Jun 21 – Jul 22)

Try not to seal your fate in disparaging moods. Remember: the moon that reflects your solemn mood is the same moon that lights the way for a sailor who journeys on the other side of the world. The inner compass guides you. Just make it more about truth than fiction.



**LEO** (Jul 23 – Aug 22)

In much the same way a snake wriggles out of his old skin, you will discard much of your past. You will be living more in the present with a new outlook, yet you may still feel that you can't shake the past. Though it may feel invisible now, know that change is coming.



**VIRGO** (Aug 23 – Sep 22)

Talk about it, sing about it and reclaim your vision. The communication field is wide open for you to make your mark. You herald ways to develop new technology and are instrumental in taking education to a new level. You feel less scattered and more productive.



**LIBRA** (Sep 23 – Oct 22)

You may feel a little more conservative these days. Anything aside from the norm might not sit well with you; you seek solace in the simple things. Great time for meditation and creating balance in all areas of your life. You inspire others with your presence.



**SCORPIO** (Oct 23 – Nov 21)

Energies are flying high and it is easy to be reckless with one's fiery temper. Could be that you find yourself having to curb your tongue. The flavour of negativity is rather unpleasant. You will choose to bless others rather than blame them. Balance the inner critic with compassion.



**SAGITTARIUS**

(Nov 22 – Dec 21)

Making your health a priority is high on your agenda. You choose to keep your body in line with your mental state. Along with stellar health, you will seek to cultivate new friendships, as companionship is important to inspire commitment.



**CAPRICORN**

(Dec 22 – Jan 19)

You may want to travel now and fill up on inspiration. It's not about running away, but rather to see other sides of yourself that you feel are empty. Get a change of perspective. If the inner journey suffices, you will go deeper and richer vistas will be yours.



**AQUARIUS** (Jan 20 – Feb 19)

A big lesson for you is how to stay in the moment. You gained the wisdom of what it means to live in the future and you didn't enjoy it. No more scattered ideas and lost energy for you. You learn the best-kept secret now and continue your current trend.



**PISCES** (Feb 20 – Mar 20)

Your focus shifts to finances and how to make more from what you have. If you feel stuck, you need to move yourself physically, as you may feel pinned under an influence of dreaminess. Break new ground as you enter your birthday with a smile. Contentment is mixed with excitement.

Ilona Hedi Granik is a clairvoyant consultant and author with 31 years of experience in astrology, multi-media art and healing. [ilona23@shaw.ca](mailto:ilona23@shaw.ca) [www.heartlightcentre.com](http://www.heartlightcentre.com)

# CLASSIFIEDS

List at: [www.commonground.ca](http://www.commonground.ca) > Advertising > Classifieds

## BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

ORGANIC FOOD STORE FOR SALE Est. 1998, Tri City area. 89k. 604-937-5315 after 7 pm.

LET GO THE THORNS AND SMELL THE ROSES. Join our Millionaire Mind Action Group and achieve total success. 604-288-8417, [colin@veraxis.net](mailto:colin@veraxis.net)

MANAGER WORLDWIDE MARKETING & Business Development with leading manufacturer of Colon Hydrotherapy Equipment. Location: North Vancouver. For full job requirement document please contact [info@thecolonet.com](mailto:info@thecolonet.com) or fax (604) 929-7142, quote file No. MWMBD

## EDUCATION

HOMEOPATHY COURSES: Online Foundation Course for beginners. Advanced courses and seminars. [www.homeopathycourses.com](http://www.homeopathycourses.com) 604-947-0757.

ACADEMY OF REIKI SCIENCES Intensives, Individual, Distant. Reiki 1 \$150, Practitioner \$250, Advanced \$350, Master \$750. Sekhem-Seichim-Reiki \$750. Manuals/Diploma, Registered Teacher CRA. (604) 739-0042.

ACADEMY OF HANDWRITING ANALYSIS CONSULTANTS Classes, Individual, Correspondence, Weekend Intensives. International Certification, Manuals/Diplomas. Certified Graphologists, Document Examiner. 604-739-0042. [disimm@telus.net](mailto:disimm@telus.net)

PROFESSIONAL EDITING, tutoring, and publishing, print & web. John William, [johnwilliam@shaw.ca](mailto:johnwilliam@shaw.ca) 604-739-7538.

## FENG SHUI

FENG SHUI & DOWSING Make sure the Energies around you are right! A FREE mini-consultation will tell. Henry Dorst, 604-731-1061

## IMMIGRATION

AK IMMIGRATION CONSULTANTS (CSIC member) for all immigration and educational visa needs. Free consultation and assessment. Contact Ajmer, 604-598-8383. Email: [akconsultants@shaw.ca](mailto:akconsultants@shaw.ca)

## IRIDOLOGY

TRIED EVERYTHING? STILL NOT WELL? Eye analysis, natural health assessment 604-684-9755. Certified Iridologist, herbalist.

## RETREATS

SILENT MEDITATION RETREAT with shakti mhi. May 13-19, 2006. Beautiful Vancouver Island oasis. \$480+gst (first 10 registrants receive \$50 off). [www.pranayoga.com](http://www.pranayoga.com) 604.682.2121

## ROOMS FOR RENT

CENTRAL SEMINAR ROOM / OFFICE. Cozy, carpeted room, seats 40. Available 24 hours, seven days/week. Natural/dimmer lighting, parking, beverage facilities, good

energies. 535 West 10th Avenue (at Cambie) (604) 875-8818.

MEDIUM SIZE MULTIPURPOSE room available can be quickly converted to classroom, meeting room, or whatever your requirement is. Kitchen access, available anytime, Broadway & Cambie area. Call Leah, 604-879-5600.

## TAROT

INSTITUTE OF TAROT TRAINING Classes, Individual, Correspondence, Certification, Readings. 604-739-0042.

## THERAPY

WHERE EVERYONE KNOWS YOUR NAME – Find out how others see you, and how to effectively relate: consider supportive, open-ended group therapy. Registered Psychologist Dr. Simon Hearn facilitates a group: Thursdays 7-8:30 pm, \$40/session. 16th & Granville, maximum eight members; gay positive. Dr. Hearn has ten years group experience. Free screening interview, call 604-732-5991.

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DIANETICS™ Understand Others, Understand Yourself. Come to the FREE weekly workshop and find out why DIANETICS is the all-time self-help bestseller! Call 604-970-9693 to RSVP. [www.DIANETICS.org](http://www.DIANETICS.org) © 2005

## Chantfest 2006

**Saturday, February 25**

### Vancouver InterSpiritual Chant Festival

First Nations ♦ Hindu ♦ Muslim ♦ Christian  
Jewish ♦ Buddhist ♦ Sufi ♦ Sikh ♦ Bahai

Full Day of Chantshops from 10am  
Evening Chant, 7:30pm, doors at 7pm  
Shaughnessy Heights United Church  
1550 W. 33rd Ave. near Granville

Info: 604-222-3379  
[vancouverchants.com](http://vancouverchants.com)

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# Why we fight

FILMS WORTH WATCHING • ROBERT ALSTEAD

In Eugene Jarecki's compelling *Why We Fight* (opening February 17), we're in similar territory to *Fahrenheit 9/11*, *The World According to Bush* (*Le Monde Selon Bush*) and other documentaries questioning the "war on terror." *Why We Fight*, however, places the US hostilities toward Iraq within the historical context of international aggression, by what Gore Vidal dubs the "United States of Amnesia."

It's not just that Bush and his cronies had an agenda for invading Iraq prior to the 9/11 terrorist attacks. That's now widely known. Rather, the doc argues, the US is a nation pre-programmed to wage war. The economy and corporate USA need war to make money. Congress needs the defence contracts for the jobs back home. Politicians tow a military line to look strong for elections. The military needs to justify its place as the most powerful force in the world.

The film uses as a starting point president Eisenhower's famous "military-industrial complex" speech to the nation in 1961, wherein he stated, "Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machinery of defence with our peaceful methods and goals."

However, the country is now invested to the hilt in its military and the citizenry is dozing. It just takes a president willing to pull the trigger, which is every president since the Second World War, and boom.

Director Eugene Jarecki, who previously made the incisive *The Trials of Henry Kissinger*, covers a lot of ground in the short space of the film. Visits to arms shows and military bases and archival newsreels spanning more than half a century illustrate how entrenched the US is in militarism. Stealth fighter pilots, who dropped the first bombs in Gulf War II, talk like boys with toys about the excitement of being able to try out an enhanced, guided bomb in a real-life situation. Experts, retired US military officers

and politicians shred homespun myths about fighting to "spread democracy and freedom."



*Why We Fight* shows how the military-industrial complex not only profits from war but creates more war.

Although Jarecki clearly takes a side, he doesn't hit you over the head with a sledgehammer. The spectrum of voices is a credit to his journalistic rigour. One moment, it's Rumsfeld in familiar, unctuous guise courting the White House press. The next, interviews with Iraqi people, including some particularly gruesome pictures of air strike victims, remind us that the US is far from peace and how far the country has moved from 9/11, where, as one commentator says, "We had the world behind us."

At times, the documentary skates too quickly across a point. For instance, in defence of the criticism that the White House has been hijacked by a cabal of extremists, presidential advisor Richard Perle says, "We are not the same people that we were before." Is this an admission of mistakes and that experience has changed them? Who are they now, then? I wanted to hear more about why think tanks are so bad. The doc moves along too fast to make it clear.

If, at times, the doc feels scattered, it is probably because it is difficult to attack a system rather than a person. It's not surprising that individual

stories stand out. As well as the drama of political intrigue and Bushite corruption, the story of a retired NYPD sergeant and Vietnam vet who lost his son in the 9/11 attacks is particularly poignant. He describes with disarming candour how he wanted to see bombs drop and bodies pile up to avenge his son's death. That the Bush regime suggested Iraq was the guilty party was enough for him to get behind the war. Later in the film, he describes his anger at having been sold a lie. "They exploited my patriotism," he says.

The film, which won the best American documentary prize at Sundance last year, also highlights the Bush administration's enthusiasm for pre-emptive strikes. That's particularly topical given reports that the Pentagon has lowered its threshold for making a nuclear attack and the growing tensions with Iran.

In *Caché (Hidden)*, top-flight French actors Juliette Binoche and Daniel Auteuil play a middleclass couple whose lives are upset when they discover that their comings and goings from home are being filmed by a hidden camera. The slow-moving drama, for which Michael Haneke won the best director award at Cannes last year, builds the tension well. However, it's also a tease. Watching it is like trying to fill in a crossword puzzle without all the clues, which is frustrating.

*Ushpizin*, a lighthearted look at the conflict between traditional and modern values for a Hasidic Jew in Israel, has been getting favourable reviews. Writer and star Shuli Rand plays an ultra-Orthodox Jew, who welcomes in two "holy guests" during the harvest festival of Sukkot, without realizing that they are thugs on the run who will take advantage of his hospitality.

Robert Alstead writes for [www.iofilm.ca](http://www.iofilm.ca). He is currently making a cycling documentary entitled *You Never Bike Alone* ([www.youneverbikealone.com](http://www.youneverbikealone.com)).

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# It is times like these

TWENTY SOMETHING • ISHI DINIM

*The master in the art of living makes little distinction between his work and his play, his labor and his leisure, his mind and his body, his information and his recreation, his love and his religion. He hardly knows which is which. He simply pursues his vision of excellence at whatever he does, leaving others to decide whether he is working or playing. To him he's always doing both.*

— James A. Michener

Life is filled with uncertainty. If anyone out there thought I was dead, you're not alone. I thought I was too. The last few months have made me feel like curling up in a ball, and for a lot of the time that's what I did. My body had finally given up on me, telling me not so subtly, "enough". My curiosity at wondering how much I could take has evaporated into knowing how fragile things actually are. In a world that is becoming more synthetic and fantasy driven, grasping what life is about becomes confusing, intangible. I know that I will die because nature always wins, but I'm now not convinced that's going to happen just yet.

I consider myself a very decisive person. Not knowing what was happening to me, or the "right" course of action to take, really became frustrating. Coming from an exceptionally active and laborious half year of life experience then screeching to a halt into a limping hibernation. Imagine a brilliant wild cheetah transforming into a mangy sloth with mild Ebola. I had to stop withering. There was sleep to catch up on and some serious time to dwell.

Then the rain came, relentlessly, a month it pelted, feeding a meandering river. Muddy, it became swollen, depression seeping into a cracked foundation. I must leave my apartment. How many days has it been?

When you feel like a ghost in your life, there comes a shift, an immediacy forcing you to appreciate the gravity of each situation. You could be blown away from all this so effortlessly. The details count in a different way, fleeting and precious. Standing in line at the grocery I smiled at the little things: kids, peoples' mannerisms, my own wounds. Merino wool really is a gracious gift for them critters to share with us. Very good soups got me back some equilibrium. I accepted not knowing what to do to fix my perceived disaster. I was determined to do less, there wasn't much I was capable of if I'd wanted to. By just relaxing, came a time for contemplation. It was as if the world in all its ugliness and beauty revealed itself in more "real" terms. A gift, in the form of Vonnegut's *A Man Without a Country*, found it's way to me and it all seemed a bit more bearable after that. My own significance, which seemed immense and fraught with pettiness, fit in perspective to a larger picture. This struggle of being human is what it is, and sometimes it's not a hell of a lot of fun.

Basically there is some good news, I don't think I'm dead yet. Though I highly advise pinching oneself every once in a while just to check. There is some great stuff to do if you're still here.

*Ishi graduated from Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design in 2001, with a BFA major in photography. He makes films, collects cacti, and ponders many things. Currently he is trying to figure out what to do with the rest his life.*

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It is believed that some individuals have a genetic predisposition to a receding hairline (*most common in men*) or hair/follicle thinning over larger areas of scalp (*more common in women*). These conditions result from hormonal changes caused by an enzyme in the dermal papilla called 5-alpha-reductase. This enzyme breaks down the hormone testosterone into dihydrotestosterone (DHT).

Over a period of time, an over abundance of DHT causes the hair follicle to degrade and shortens the active phase of the hair, eventually leading to thinner hair and eventual hair loss.

### How does BIO-FEN PLUS™ work?

Specific compounds within the herbal extracts inhibit the 5-alpha-reductase (and therefore reduce DHT) to prevent or slow down the rate of hair loss. This process is the principle by which the prescription drugs such as Propecia (*finasteride*) work. However, BIO-FEN PLUS™ also contains additional compounds which remove excess cholesterol and testosterone – the building blocks of DHT. BIO-FEN PLUS™ also contains vitamins to increase blood flow to the small capillaries that feed the hair roots, to deliver the active herbal compounds and remove waste. **Therefore, BIO-FEN PLUS™ provides a natural, safer alternative to expensive drugs, and/or expensive & painful hair transplants.** As with the prescription alternatives, results vary from person to person, and no one product will work for everyone.

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### How safe is BIO-FEN PLUS™?

The ingredient combination in BIO-FEN PLUS™ is generally safe for most adults. However, the following cautions are advised:

**Folic acid:** Consult a health care practitioner if you are uncertain whether or not you are taking adequate vitamin B12, as folate supplementation can mask a Vitamin B12 deficiency.

**Vitamin B3:** Consult a health care practitioner prior to use if you have impaired liver function.

**Vitamin B6:** Consult a health care practitioner prior to use if you are taking levodopa.

### What is the quality of BIO-FEN PLUS™?

BIO-FEN PLUS™ is manufactured in Canada according to a quality assurance program called Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP). This ensures that the ingredients are tested for their level of quality, potency & purity, prior to production and again prior to sale.

See our website to locate your nearest Health Food Store or Pharmacy that offers BIO-FEN PLUS™ and other quality products from Hair Grow Technology. If you have any questions or comments about our products that target hair loss and support the growth of strong, healthy hair, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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Flax lignans, standardized to 20% secoisolariciresinol diglucoside (SDG)	.....100 mg
D-calcium pantothenate (Vitamin B5)	.....10.40 mg
Niacinamide (Vitamin B3)	.....10.25 mg
Pyridoxine HCl (Vitamin B6)	.....2.00 mg
Riboflavin (Vitamin B2)	.....1.58 mg
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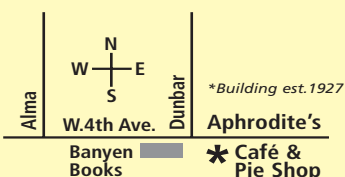


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Ground Zero in the controversy swirling around high blood pressure is, in fact, the very definition of "high," an arbitrary notch on the dial that medical science uses to distinguish a "normal" (and therefore healthy) blood pressure reading from a "high" (unhealthy) blood pressure reading. Over the years, intervention by public health agencies and pharmaceutical companies has changed, redefined and rejigged this "risk factor," yet curiously only in one direction: lower. With lower thresholds for what is considered high blood pressure, vast new numbers of otherwise healthy people, including children, are labelled "at risk" and possibly worthy of drug treatment.

Current medical opinion cites that blood pressure above 140 over 90 is high, meriting some kind of attention. A decade ago, 160 over 100 was considered high. In the latest incarnation of guidelines, 130 over 80 has been labelled prehypertensive.

Let's get a reality check here.

Good physicians wouldn't target a single parameter for treatment and ignore a patient's unique circumstances, including his hereditary factors or whether he smoked or exercised, and so on. But that doesn't stop more and more of us from getting our blood pressure checked, even in the aisles of drug stores, and later walking out of our doctors' offices wearing the label "hypertensive."

God forbid if you didn't know the "silent killer" was stalking you.

But knowledge is power right?

What if the opposite were true? What if discovering you had high blood pressure led you, not towards a healthier lifestyle and a lower level of risk, but in the opposite direction?

A number of innovative Canadian studies, published over 20 years ago, question the wisdom of the blood pressure screening orthodoxy. Researchers studying a group of 230 steelworkers in Hamilton, Ontario, for more than five years found that the people who were informed that they had high blood pressure went on to be sicker, and more absent from work. Most surprising of all, these individuals ended up earning \$1,000 less than their counterparts, despite similar incomes in the year before screening. In other words, just being told you've got high blood pressure, with other things being equal, can make you worse off.

The researchers concluded that their results have major implications for hypertension screening programs, because it was the label, not the hypertension itself, which was linked to how healthy the patients were five years later.

Despite the thousands of dollars volunteers will raise during Heart Month, I wonder how much of the money will be allocated towards studying the very paradigm upon which all of the hypertension hysteria is built? About the wisdom of more and more of us getting labelled and then onto faster and more aggressive treatment (read pharmaceuticals)?

Me? I take comfort in the fact that when I walk through a cemetery I know probably half the people in the ground had normal blood pressure. The "silent killer" likely had nothing to do with their deaths, however much we want to focus on, and slay, a single bogeyman.

*Alan Cassels is the co-author of Selling Sickness: How the World's Biggest Pharmaceutical Companies Are Turning Us All Into Patients, and a drug policy researcher at the University of Victoria. He has spent most of the last 10 years studying how clinical research about prescription drugs is communicated to policy makers, prescribers and consumers. He is also the founder of Media Doctor Canada (www.mediadoctor.ca), which evaluates the reporting of medical treatments in Canada's media.*

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## Say goodbye to your comfort zone

The need to protect from abandonment, from being hurt and from losing oneself is stronger than the need to be loved. I find that people in relationships would rather stay in their comfort zone with what is familiar and safe, even if it creates problems, than to surrender their fears and be open to love. People go for the less perceived stress or pain. I have found that it is common for people to be in a kind of trance, carrying baggage from the past from their family of origin (cellular memories), conditioning, unconscious beliefs, perceptions, thoughts, expectations and feelings. I have observed that all of this programming forms a relationship-love-map. The Ego (emotional-fear-body) takes over and sabotages by reinforcing negative programming through power-struggles, reacting with anger, rigidity, co-dependency or addictive behaviors. I have noticed that people develop reactive survival coping strategies to deal with their unconscious fears and to lower their anxieties. It is the coping strategies that negatively affect the relationship and become its undoing.

I find that many couples are unaware of what is needed to create a healthy relationship and how to work with healthy boundaries, different emotional languages and effective communication styles. I teach couples that relationships are mirrors giving us the opportunity to see ourselves reflected, having the choice to consciously or unconsciously learn through playing out our drama-love-map. The mind-body has two ways to be in relationship: open into surrender and growth or closed into resistance and stagnation. I work with couples giving them the skills and tools to become more open, conscious and healthy in their relationship and to create change at a deep level.

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mainstreaming of pornography present us with impossible standards for beauty, style and wealth, which younger people unconsciously use as templates for potential partners.

Market psychology relies, and has always relied, on dissatisfaction – with one's body, hair, features, education and personality – to move products and services. The surface becomes the real, the form the essence. An alienated self, manipulated by the market into subliminal self-loathing, is in a tricky position when it comes to love.

When relationships are commodified like every other service and product, people are coached into incompleteness. "When we're incomplete, we're always searching for somebody to complete us," writes author Tom Robbins. "When, after a few years, or a few months, of a relationship, we find that we're still unfulfilled, we blame our partners and take up with somebody more promising. This can go on and on – series polygamy – until we admit that while a partner can add sweet dimensions to our lives, we, each of us, are responsible for our own fulfillment. Nobody else can provide it for us, and to believe otherwise is to delude ourselves dangerously and to program for eventual failure every relationship we enter."

The word "person" is drawn from persona, an ancient Greek word for mask, in the theatrical sense. The root meaning of the word betrays the illusory, playful nature of our surface personalities. In Greek tragedies and comedies, the masks had carved openings through which actors spoke. Who, or what, speaks through us? Do we read from the script supplied to us by the interests of disconnection, or do we actively listen to what's going on within and without?

A culture that thrives on weapons of mass delusion, whether they're the seductive lies of cosmetic alteration, brand identity or national security, is heading for sci-fi hybridization: one part *Brave New World*, two parts *1984*. Love cannot flourish where lies, whether economic or spiritual, reign supreme. Addicted to fossil fuels and the two-car garage, with lifestyles financed by unsustainable personal debt, our society stumbles along a path every bit as false, and dangerous, as the one taken by a junkie on East Hastings. Westerners live massively out of equilibrium with the environment, treating the planet as a combination of crack house and garbage dump. And we can't even get a cheap thrill from the ride. Too many of us travel to jobs we don't like in vehicles we can't afford to buy stuff we don't really need, while the resources required to fuel this mad whirl dry up. Why would we expect relationships in this cultural and ecological milieu to be any better than in the past? Why wouldn't we expect some scary stirrings in the collective unconscious, some indications that the ground of being is shifting under this psychic weight? At the very least,

why wouldn't we expect more stressful lives as a result of our hypervigilant, pharmaceutically tweaked, megahertz mentalities, with love morphing into the deformed forms of neurotic possessiveness and sexual perversion?

In our part of the world, over half of all marriages end in divorce within 10 years. Recently, I flipped through my mother's high school yearbook from 1947. The graduating students' pompadours and beehive hairdos had a certain retro charm about them. The kids look like adults in miniature, with the role they have rehearsed for all their lives, adulthood, now within their grasp. My mother and father married a half-century ago. They, and friends they knew at the time, have lasted as couples to this day, mostly happily, with the exception of one couple. When times got tough, my parents didn't bail out. But then again, they met in a time before the online upgrade, the instant rebate and the "no questions asked" return policy. Few people then thought in terms of the first-quarter business cycle. They lived more by the phases of the moon than the cycles of the motherboard.

Of course, plenty of couples in the past suffered under years of mutual loathing, chained in unholy acrimony out of social or religious pressure. Few mourn the passing of the postwar era, with its repressive innocence and narrow worldview. That being said, I can appreciate that there is such a thing as trade-offs. For all the advances of the past 40 years with gender issues and multicultural understanding, we have probably given away a few precious things in the bargain, not the least of which is our time.

Serendipity and lazy afternoons are like sunlight to romantic connection. Family and community are its soil. It's subterranean spring, its aquifer, is a tacit sense of the soul's reality. In a world growing more fractured under data-mining, personal surveillance, corporate drug-pushing and a war on terror that the current US vice president says "will not end in our lifetime," love of any kind has its work cut out for it.

Shortly after I met my angelic partner, she passed on to me a quote from author Michael Crichton, on separating love from its counterfeits. "There *are* ways to know real love. It feels calm. It's steady, and it can easily last a lifetime. It's nourishing. People grow under its influence, they become who they really are, not what someone expects them to be. Real love isn't blind; on the contrary, people feel understood and accepted for whom they really are. It's healing."

In other words, true love connects us to "the real thing." Not a soft drink, but the ultimate act or actor behind all masks. And on that note, I wish you all victory on V-day.

*Geoff Olson is a Vancouver writer and political cartoonist, and he dedicates this article to Erin. Geoff can be reached at mwiseguise.com*

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the cause. Once protected, the Kogawa House will be used for a writers-in-residence program. Donations may be made online at [www.conservancy.bc.ca](http://www.conservancy.bc.ca) or call 604-733-2313.

## DuPont pays for Teflon cover-up

DuPont recently reached a \$19.5 million settlement with US officials after being convicted of charges that for 20 years it concealed the harmful health effects of perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), a chemical used to manufacture Teflon, Goretex, Stainguard, Scotchguard and scores of other products.

The EPA could have fined the company as much as \$445 million for its cover-up of health effects and water pollution. PFOAs cause birth defects, cancer, organ damage and respiratory failure especially among workers who have massive exposure.

DuPont previously settled a class-action lawsuit brought by Ohio and West Virginia residents over the issue for \$128 million. Billions in class action claims are pending. In addition, there is an ongoing criminal investigation of Dupont's actions regarding PFOA pollution of the environment. Meanwhile, Goretex, Teflon and numerous other PFOA products are still available on the market and workers are still being exposed to PFOAs. Dupont's total revenues for 2004 were \$27 billion.

Since none of the manufacturers have proven their plastic coated cookware safe, avoid it. A further problem has developed in that old coated cookware can't be recycled and melted down without releasing the toxic PFOAs.

## Animal models in medical research unreliable

A report from the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) shows that the number of animals used in research, teaching and testing increased 16 percent – by nearly two and a half million animals – from 2002 to 2003.

Researchers create animal models by attempting to mimic naturally occurring human health problems in formerly healthy animals. However, researchers are not studying the actual human maladies and different species react differently to the drugs and methodologies tested. There are major biological and anatomical differences between and within all species.

The animal experiments comprise only a part of the research system. They are conducted before, during and after human clinical and in-vitro (non-animal) studies. For example, while saccharin caused cancer in animals, only a warning appears on the package. As side effects of drugs cannot be determined in animal models, they are marketed with a long list of warnings. When drugs fail the animal tests, the drug manufacturers state that you can't rely on animal tests. [www.lifeforcefoundation.org](http://www.lifeforcefoundation.org)



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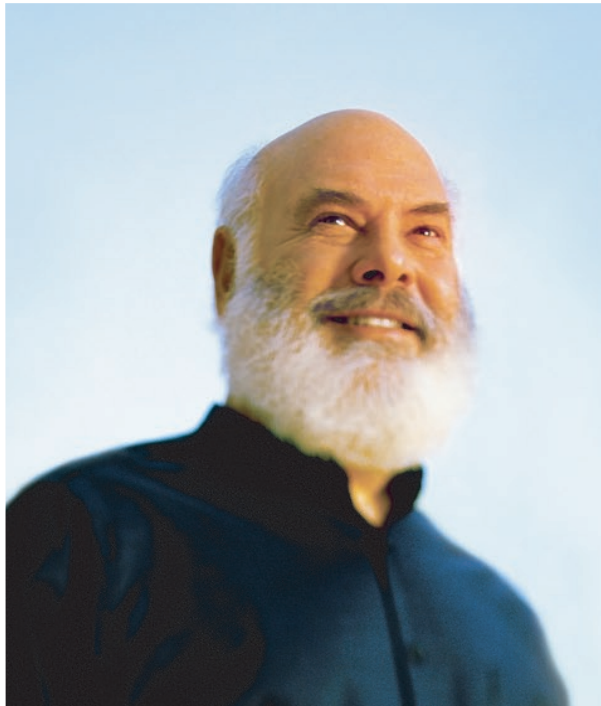
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**WEIL**<sup>TM</sup>  
Andrew Weil, M.D.

# Heart Health Formula

CoQ10 and Omega-3 fatty acids

*The ubiquitous presence of this compound in every living cell led to its name “ubiquinone”, but you may know it as Coenzyme Q10 or CoQ10. It strengthens and protects the heart and increases aerobic capacity. I take CoQ10 every day.*

  
Andrew Weil, M.D.

## CoQ10 and Omega-3 fatty acids - the ideal combination for cardiovascular health

Coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10) and omega-3 fatty acids work synergistically to provide enhanced protection against cardiovascular disease. CoQ10 improves the use of oxygen at the cellular level, prevents oxidation of LDL cholesterol, maintains healthy blood vessels, reduces the risk of clots and plaque rupture, and supports optimal functioning of the heart muscle. Omega-3 fatty acids can lower triglyceride levels, increase HDL cholesterol and help minimize inflammation and blood clotting.

Andrew Weil, M.D., donates all of his after-tax profits from the sale of Weil Nutritional Supplements to the Weil Foundation ([www.weilfoundation.org](http://www.weilfoundation.org)), an organization dedicated to sustaining the vision of integrative medicine.

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